

# CHRISTIAN COURIER

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## Iraq's Christian minority attacked

5 churches hit, 11 killed in car bombs on day of worship



Assyrian Evangelical Church in Baghdad

BAGHDAD (BP) — Five Catholic churches in Iraq were targeted in car bomb attacks Sunday, Aug. 1; 11 people were killed and dozens were wounded in the first large-scale terrorist attacks against Iraq's Christian minority, an estimated 3 percent of the nation's 24 million people.

Four churches in Baghdad were struck in the orchestrated attacks, along with a church in Mosul in northern Iraq. The churches trace their lineage back to the first century, long predating Muhammad's founding of Islam in 622 AD.

### Attempt to create a religious divide

Middle East Concern, a group that assists persecuted Christians in the Middle East, reported in a news release Aug. 2:

"The government of Iraq has been quick to portray these attacks as an attack on the whole of Iraq. Likewise, Muslim leaders, including Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Husseini al-Sistani and a spokes-

man for the radical cleric Muqtada al-Sadr speaking on the Al-Jazeera news channel, have spoken in support of the Christian community.

"Many in Iraq believe that one objective of the insurgency is to divide the population on religious lines as a means of preventing the new government [from] operating successfully," the Middle East Concern news release stated.

MEC, based in Loughborough, England, is a coalition of organizations and individuals that has sought to aid persecuted Christians in Iraq and other countries in the Middle East, including Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Yemen and Libya.

### An exodus of Christians feared

The Aug. 1 attacks against the Catholic churches were timed after 6 p.m. when Sunday evening worship services were underway.

The MEC news release noted, "Church services are held on

Fridays and on Sun-day evening because Sun-day is a working day, the weekend being Thursday and Friday," in the Muslim country.

"Places of worship are easy targets because it is well known at what times there will be large gatherings of people," MEC stated.

MEC also noted: "Priests and other Christian leaders fear these attacks will prompt an exodus of Christians from Iraq. Up till now, they have persuaded people to stay; however, they now feel they have few arguments left to counter those

seeking to leave. One priest said, 'It would be very bad for Iraq if the Christians left' because it would not help the establishment of a pluralistic, tolerant country."

MEC reported that police also found a bomb outside St. John the Baptist Church in Baghdad that failed to explode. In Kirkuk, police said an explosion went off at around 7:45 p.m. in a Christian neighborhood but there were no casualties because most people were at church.

### Attacks quickly condemned by Muslim leaders

A spokesman for the US Embassy in Baghdad released a statement after the attack, declaring, "We deplore these cowardly and murderous bombings and condemn those responsible for them. We extend our condolences to the families and friends of those killed and injured. As despicable as these bombings are everywhere and at any time, to target those in a house of worship

is particularly horrible and cruel. We reiterate our support for Iraq's interim government and assure all Iraqis of our continued commitment to their freedom, security, and prosperity."

The attacks followed a recent series of attacks and threats against liquor stores mostly owned by people in the Christian sector, according to various news reports.

See Iraq p. 2...

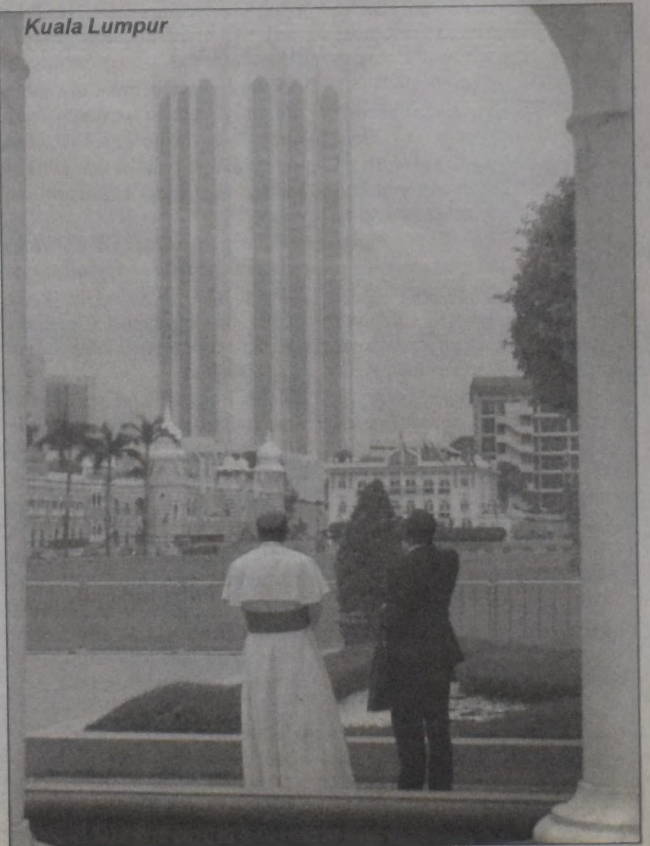
## Christian theologians gather in Muslim Malaysia

Harry der Nederlanden

Theologians from the main traditions of Christendom gathered in Kuala Lumpur, the capital of Malaysia at the beginning of August

to discuss continuing obstacles to Christian unity. They gathered under the auspices of the Faith and Order Commission of the World See Malaysia p. 2...

Kuala Lumpur





## News

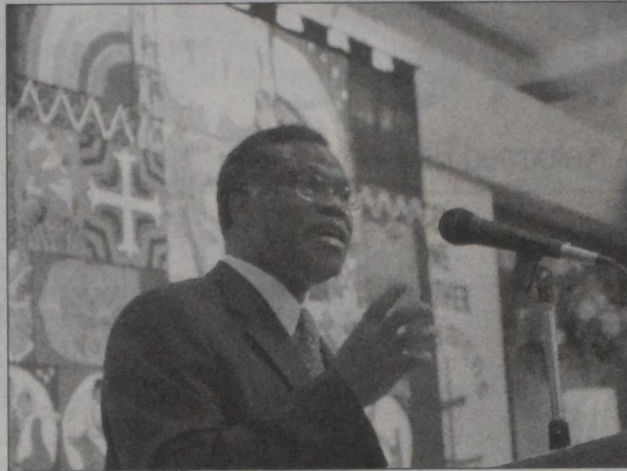
...Malaysia *cont. from p.1*

Council of Churches.

It is the first of such gatherings to be held in a country that is overwhelmingly Muslim. "It will provide an opportunity to showcase Malaysia, as a country where people of diverse cultures and faiths can live together in peace and harmony," said Lin Chen Ean, the president of the Council of Churches of Malaysia.

The meeting brought together some 120 representatives to discuss themes like the mutual recognition of baptism; different understandings of the nature and mission of the church (ecclesiology); relations between ethnic and national identities and the search for the unity of the church; the nature of the human person from a Christian point of view (theological anthropology) and its consequences for community identity, human sexuality, disabilities or bio-ethics; and the way in which the texts, symbols and practices of different Christian churches may be interpreted, communicated and received (ecumenical hermeneutics). A huge agenda.

The theme of the meeting is "Receive one another as Christ has



WCC general-secretary Rev Dr Samuel Kobia

received you, for the glory of God" (Rom. 15:7).

Last year, then president of the WCC Konrad Raiser said that if the churches genuinely recognized each other's baptism, this would be "a Copernican Revolution in ecumenical dialogue."

Some of the churches present at the consultation are not actually members of the WCC, including the Catholic Church and some Pentecostal and evangelical churches, but their contributions

are given equal weight. The WCC's 342 member churches come from Protestant, Anglican and Orthodox traditions. The full plenary session of Faith and Order meets only once between general assemblies, the ninth of which will be held in Porto Alegre, Brazil in 2006.

Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi opened the meeting. In his speech he urged religious leaders to shun extremists and preach moder-

ation. "As Prime Minister of Malaysia, I am not a leader of Muslims, but a Muslim leader of all Malaysians," said Abdullah. Muslims account for some 60 per cent of the 23 million people of Malaysia, while Christians make up just over six per cent.

He acknowledged there was "less trust and goodwill" between Islam and Christianity now than a few years ago. "The lines of conflict today between religions and civilizations are evident," he said. The "dangerous but dominant view" that "this is a battle between good and evil" exists "on both sides of the divide," creating a situation where "there is less trust and goodwill between Islam and Christianity than there was a few years ago."

Inter-faith dialogue, he argued, is essential. "We need to talk to one another openly about the issues that impact on all our lives. A meaningful dialogue will not be possible if we do not respect each other's freedom of worship."

The Malaysian prime minister ended his address to the WCC gathering with a plea for tolerance and cooperation in the face of world poverty, hunger and

injustice. "With all these problems surrounding us, religion must be a beacon of hope," said Abdullah, who was moved to tears in the presence of the religious leaders. "Religion must bring out the best in us and not the worst." He concluded: "We cannot stand before a compassionate God while there is still so much we have left undone because we are disunited."

WCC general-secretary Rev Dr Samuel Kobia said that "Malaysia is a reasonable model on how people from diverse communities can live together after the Sept 11 attack left differing perceptions of religion."

He said the meeting would give the religious leaders a chance to share their experiences and promote better understanding of different faiths.

"It is important to have dialogue at a time when religion and violence is being projected in the world, fuelled by the Sept 11 incident, (and) at a time when there are tendencies to project (that) Islam condones violence," he said at a press briefing reported by the Malaysian *Star*.

[With stories from WCC and The Star.]

...Iraq *continued from p.1*

Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Husseini al-Sistani condemned the attacks as threatening "Iraq's unity, stability and independence."

"We condemn and reproach these hideous crimes and deem necessary the collaboration of everyone – the government and the people – in putting an end to aggression on Iraqis," the Shiite leader also stated.

"We assert the importance of respecting the rights of Christian civilians and other religious minorities and reaffirm their right to live in their home country Iraq in security and peace," al-Sistani said.

The spokesman for radical cleric al-Sadr told Al-Jazeera television, "This is a cowardly act and targets all Iraqis."

## Al-Zarqawi blamed

The interim government's interior ministry spokesman, Sabah Kadhim, told the Voice of America the church bombings and similar attacks bear the hallmarks of Al Qaeda.

"... I don't think it's a question of just a person like [Jordanian militant Abu Musab al-Zarqawi], wherever he is or whoever he is,

really conducting all this," Kadhim said. "To me, I think the facts are there were training camps in Afghanistan and therefore there are fully trained terrorists from throughout the Middle East, who are misled to believe that there is this fight between Christianity and Islam."

The government's national security adviser, Mowaffak al-Rubaie, told CNN that the thrust of the attacks against Christians and their coordinated timing point to al-Zarqawi.

The Iraqi official speculated that al-Zarqawi's goals include driving a wedge between Iraq's Muslims and Christians; fueling the perception among some Iraqis that the Christian minority is helping the US-led coalition in Iraq; and heightening anti-Christian sentiment among Islamic radicals in the Sunni Triangle to build pressure for a Christian exodus from Iraq.

## Christians "knew" such attacks were coming

The four car bomb explosions in Baghdad were timed within a two-minute span, according to the

Associated Press.

"We were in Mass and suddenly we heard a big boom, and I couldn't feel my body anymore," a blood-covered worshiper from Our Lady of Salvation Church later told a reporter with USA Today.

Another worshiper from the church told a Chicago Tribune reporter that he had just taken communion when the bomb was detonated. "We saw the roof, pieces of glass and everything else coming down on us," the 72-year-old man said. "People started running for the doors. People near the cars were burned severely. There was fire and smoke everywhere."

Contrary to some early news reports, this was not the first time that churches and Christian religious buildings in Iraq have been targeted since the fall of Saddam Hussein.

September 2003: missile attack on convent, Mosul

November 2003: bombs discovered at two Christian schools, Mosul and Baghdad, accompanied by messages



Church in Mosul

ordering them to convert to Islam or be killed

December 2003: Bomb explosion at a church in Baghdad on Christmas Eve

December 2003: Bomb discovered at monastery in Mosul and defused

There have also been many attacks on Christian shops and businesses. Christians have been threatened, victimised and several have been assassinated. Women

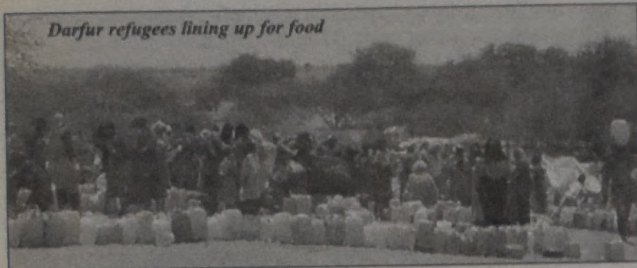
in the south are being forced for the first time to cover their hair like Muslim women. On January 4 2004 a group of more than 200 mainly Muslim intellectuals and political leaders from Iraq called for an end to the attacks on Christians.

[Story compiled by Baptist Press News and Barnabas Fund.]



## Politics

## Situation in Sudan officially called genocide



Darfur refugees lining up for food

### Harry der Nederlanden

The "slow genocide" in Darfur, Sudan has finally made it into the headlines of the mainline media and onto the agenda of the nations and the UN. But only very slowly. The church press began reporting the atrocities several months ago, and when the big papers learned that the churches were not just complaining once again about Christians being victimized by Muslims, they took up the cause.

The US issued a warning to Sudan a couple of months ago, but then a few weeks passed as those in power debated whether what was happening was really a genocide or just ethnic cleansing. Meanwhile, for Europe the wall being built by Israel to keep out suicide bombers seems to be so tall that it can't see beyond it to Africa.

The pattern – in Canada as well as in Europe – seems to be this: do nothing, all the while asking plaintively, "Why doesn't the US do something? Or are the Americans only concerned about Whites? About oil? About Israel? About propping up tyrants?"

When the US does intervene, we can wail, "Who appointed them the policeman of the world?" And if someone other than an American gets killed, we can fume about American unilateralism, militarism, ineptitude and wealth.

Sudan is a Muslim country and Arabs are very much in control in the capital Khartoum. But have the Arab or Muslim nations done anything to rein in Sudan's extermination campaigns first against the Christians and animists in the south and now against black – Muslims mostly – in the west? Many, many more people have been displaced in Sudan than in Palestine, and there is no comparison in terms of the number of people killed – and with far less cause. Yet, Israel is a pariah and the Sudan is on the UN Human Rights Commission.

The UN finally passed a weak resolution on July 30, a full 3 months after all the "never again"

speeches made on the anniversary of the Rwanda genocide (see CC, May 10). Already then, Koffi Anan, Secretary-General of the UN, said nearly 1000 people were being killed every week, to say nothing of the systematic rape of women and torching of villages.

According to more recent reports (two weeks old when you read this), 1000 people are now dying every day in the villages and camps along the Chad-Sudan border. An estimated 50,000 have already died and almost 2 million driven from their homes. There are warnings that if large scale help does not arrive soon, as many as 300,000 may die there in the desert.

Christian aid organizations ready to provide aid have long been complaining that government action is necessary because the roads to the area are unsafe and often impassible. Sudan has often raised obstacles to aid. Helicopters are needed, and more food and supplies. Only about half the aid promised by Europe has materialized.

A recent story in *The Sunday Times* by a reporter in Darfur questions whether the Sudan government exercises very much control in the province. It describes the area as similar to Afghanistan – a lawless territory ruled by gangs with guns looking for plunder. Others report, however, that there is purpose behind the madness, and that the government in Khartoum is guilty of complicity.

When the US congress at last declared that what is happening in Darfur is indeed a genocide, Sudan's ambassador accused the US of dramatizing the situation in an election year to exploit "their suffering and plight to get elected." Sudan's President Omar al-Beshir accused the West of using the issue "to target Islam."

Egypt's Foreign Minister Ahmed Abul Geit argued that Sudan should be given time to implement its commitments to the UN. The situation in Darfur is too

## Minority government and the case for electoral reform

Canada now has the first minority government in 25 years and the tenth since 1921. With only 135 seats in the House of Commons, Paul Martin's Liberals are 20 seats short of an absolute majority. Back in 1979, during the last minority government, Joe Clark's Progressive Conservative Party was elected to 136 seats, 6 short of a majority. At the time the Québec wing of the Social Credit Party, known as Créditistes, held the balance of power with exactly 6 seats, providing the Conservatives with an exceedingly precarious bare majority, provided they were able to come to an understanding with the smaller party.

Of course, this did not happen, and Clark's government suffered defeat in the House of Commons in December of that year, forcing Canadians back to the polls in February of the following year. The 1980 vote brought back the Liberal Party and a majority government.

Indeed Canadians tend to think of majority government as the more normal state of affairs. Our Westminster-style parliamentary system places a premium on efficient government able to get things done quickly and expeditiously. To be sure, the opposition parties have their assigned roles to play, especially in pointing out flaws in the government's agenda. But they cannot ultimately obstruct the government's business – provided, of course, that the government has a comfortable majority and a party discipline strong enough to keep backbenchers in line.

If the government lacks such a majority, there is a continual danger of its being defeated in the Commons, which in our political system would lead to its resignation. This is why minority governments tend to be short-lived. Sometimes a government will wait until it is higher in the public opinion polls and then engineer its own defeat, hoping to secure its coveted majority in the ensuing early election. This is what Pierre Trudeau's Liberal minority government did in 1974, only two years into its mandate.

However, in some democracies it is assumed as a matter of course that political parties do not



## Principalities & Powers

David T. Koyzis

form governments as much as participate in them. Where some variety of proportional representation (PR) is in place, no single party can be said to have won an election. Virtually every vote counts, and parties are represented in parliament in proportion to their actual support in the public at large. Voter turnout is generally much higher under PR than in our own first-past-the-post (FPTP) system, where millions of votes are typically wasted. Following an election, political parties form coalition governments in which the various cabinet portfolios are distributed among their members.

Earlier this year the Law Commission of Canada published a report titled *Voting Counts: Electoral Reform for Canada*. It recommended the adoption of a German-style mixed-member system, which would add an element of proportionality to our current electoral system. Two-thirds of MPs would be elected in single-member ridings using FPTP, while the remainder would be elected from provincial or territorial lists drawn up by the parties. The resulting parliament should be more of a microcosm of the electorate, better reflecting actual support for the several parties in the House of Commons. After three elections contested under the new system, a parliamentary committee would be struck to review it with an eye to possible incremental reforms.

As "an independent federal law reform agency that advises Parliament on how to improve and modernize Canada's laws," the Law Commission is a significant voice which has now been added to the argument for some form of PR. Other countries have adopted electoral reform and benefited from it. It's now time for Canada to follow suit.


David T. Koyzis teaches political science at Redeemer University College, Ancaster, Ontario, and is the author of *Political Visions and Illusions* (InterVarsity Press). His weblog can be found at: <<http://byzantinicalvinist.blogspot.com/>>.



complex to expect quick results, he said, but with the help of the African Union, Khartoum is taking steps to address it.

The fly in the ointment is that Khartoum used similar assurances as stalling tactics for years while it continued slaughtering civilians in the south. But this time, with the help of the janjaweed – demons on horseback – perhaps it will not take as long to attain its objectives. Perhaps Khartoum really has no objective in Darfur – other than pretending, like Saddam, that it has more power and sovereignty than it really does. It is real power, however: power exercised in this case to keep help away while thousands upon thousands are dying.

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## Editorial

## Introducing Herman de Jong

Maybe I'm being presumptuous, Lord, Heavenly Hosts, and all you waiting Saints gathered there above, but I'd like to introduce you all to my friend, Herman de Jong, who recently strolled your way, a bit reluctantly so he may be late, dawdling along the way. He's a pudgy little Dutch Canadian and he probably looks a little lost, bemused and filled with wonder. He was that way down here already.

Someone else should really be doing this job – one of his numerous progeny who spoke at church (no, he wasn't always distracted), but they've all been very busy trying to think of ways to share their dad and do him proud. And maybe they felt he didn't need a formal introduction. After all, you've known him a lot longer than we have, and it's said that you look even into the inmost hearts of men. (That's scary – for you as well as for us – a little like diving deep into a tangled patch of seaweed.)

Still, you can't hear the sound of my voice uttering my thoughts until I speak them, can you? And you seem to like that – the sound of voices murmuring to you in the night, and, of course, the sound of voices singing songs. The more the merrier. That's not just spiritual stuff – sound I mean, human speech. Lungs diaphragm the larynx lips tongue cheeks – all that physical, fleshy stuff has to be in good working order for us to converse to pray lament and sing. You realize that, I know, but I thought perhaps I better remind you just in case, because, you see, my friend Herman there, hanging around in the vestibule, loves to sing. And he has a lovely voice too. Being used to choirs of angels, you may not notice that right away. Like I said, I don't want to be pushy and I don't know how these things are managed up there, but Herman will certainly need a robust, healthy set of lungs if he's going to sing for you.

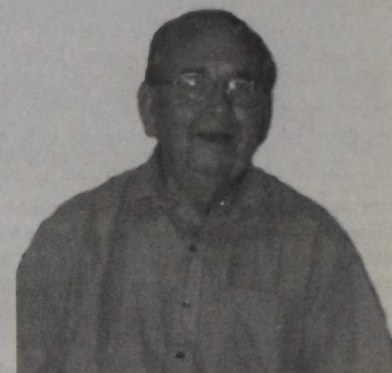
Oh, yes, and he's a marvelous storyteller as well, and when he really gets into a story, he waves his fists shakes his jowls stamps his feet gyrates bobs and rolls his eyes. So, well, he'll need the rest of his – uh – equipment too, if you expect him to contribute to the jollity of your famous sabbath feasts. I'm sure that with everything you've had to witness here on earth the last hundred years, you're ready for a few laughs. Herman's your man – the clown with a tear in the corner of his eye.

Another reason I took the task of introducing Herman to you was to correct a misconception to which I may inadvertently have given rise just a few weeks ago when I wrote about digging holes in heaven. Although I didn't name any names, I'm sure you knew who I was talking about. You need not worry about trusting Herman with a shovel; honest, he won't bury anything until it's all worn out useless and ashamed to be seen.

Burying things like refrigerators, stoves and pianos is not really an obsession; more like a hobby. Maybe it's empathy that drives him to it, or a fascination with hidden things; or perhaps he's been mocking the burial practices of the ancient Egyptians. The again maybe he's just full of the dickens. Mischievous. Assign one of your trainee angels to watch him and let you know when he gets that elvish twinkle in his eye and his lips pucker up into that yummy little grin. Not that you'd want to stop him, but I bet you'd enjoy being there when it happens. He may be your spitting image, but his mind is wired a little differently; it sometimes confuses work and play. Of course, now that it's your day of rest too, maybe you'd like to join him. That may be one way to keep him from digging holes all over your heavenly lawns. The golfers among the saints might object to that, and no one wants a heavenly brouhaha.

One way to keep him out of trouble would be to scare up a bevy of young girls for him to form a choir. He likes to direct as well as sing, so he'll be sure to provide some competition for your angelic hosts. If the girls are all busy elsewhere, send him some of those gruff farmers from Zeeland or Terschelling: he'd enjoy the challenge of teaching them to sing – and to show them angel guys the virtues of the human voice.

There are church folk down here who think the organ is the heavenly instrument par excellence. Herman has dreams of building one right near the heavenly gates to welcome all the rest of us when our time comes. I had a bright idea: instead of pipes of every size and shape, could you supply him with ranks of angels, from tall and skinny to short and fat, to plug into his console row on row. What a thrill that would give him – to pull out all the stops, press his fingers on the keys and hear all those pure, immaculate tones come fluting forth in perfect pitch! Well, maybe not. Scrap that idea; Herman always loved best of all to work with less than perfect things.



When we returned from Herman's last trek to the great radiation machine on mount Hamilton, we found the doors all locked and us without a key. Stiny and I circled the house, trying window after window. But Herman wasn't just a pretty face, he was also defender of the family fortress and had secured every window with a two-inch screw. "Herman, you sealed us out!" I cried in dismay. But Herman is also a man of great foresight, having locked himself out before. "No, no," he said. "Try the window to my bedroom. The step ladder's right beside the garage." And so it was. And my last service to him was to break into his locked-up house to let him in the door so he could rest. I hope Herman didn't have to break into heaven, did he? He might have enjoyed the challenge, but Jesus beat him to it – breaking death's locked doors and opening them wide so Herman could saunter in at his leisure, admiring the workmanship.

He admired good workmanship; he wasn't just a shovel man, but also an upholsterer for several years. I've heard of thrones up there in need of occasional repair. If you give Herman a few tools, he'd be only too glad to help – but keep an eye on him: he might be seized by a sudden inexplicable impulse, and, instead of fixing your fancy chair, might decide to bury it somewhere.

Harry derNederlanden

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## EDITORIAL TEAM &amp; PRODUCTION STAFF

Editor: Harry der Nederlanden  
editor@christiancourier.ca

Circulation: Rose der Nederlanden  
subscriptions@christiancourier.ca

Accounts/Advertising Manager:  
Ineke Medcalf ads@christiancourier.ca

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1 Hiscott St. St. Catharines ON L2R 1C7  
Tel: (905) 682-8311; 1-800-969-4838

Fax: (905) 682-8313; Web site:

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## Review

## Darwinism in retreat?

Thomas Woodward, *Doubts about Darwin: A History of Intelligent Design* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2003).

Reviewed by Bert den Boggende

I hardly qualify as a reviewer of a science book, but in this case one doesn't have to be very knowledgeable about science. In fact, it is actually a history of science book. It uses the theory of rhetoric, and that theory should not frighten anyone, for there is little discussion about the theory of rhetoric. The author discusses how proponents and adversaries of intelligent design have used language. All that is necessary to know about rhetoric is that it is the use of argument to persuade. While the book has about 300 pages, the actual text is no more than 200. And a good read it is. No wonder *Christianity Today* ranked it first in its category.

What struck me was that several proponents of intelligent design (ID) are not Christian; in fact, Michael Denton, the father of ID, is an agnostic. And none favor a young earth or the literalism of the "creationists" (at least what is popularly understood as creationism; many in the Reformed tradition confess that God created the world, while not holding to a literalist view of Genesis). ID proponents critique Darwin and his modern adherents on such scientific notions as gradualism, selection and mutation.

Philip Johnson, a Presbyterian law professor at Berkeley, and the driving force of the movement, also emphasizes that Darwinist usage of naturalism functions as a religion (or at least as a philosophy) and as a barrier to full academic discussion. The absence of references to God, even by those who accept that God created the universe, could be regarded as a rhetorical device: it takes a tool out of the hand of the opponents, although several have tried to equate them with creationists. It is easier to attach stigma words, such as layperson, creationist or fundamentalist, to adherents of ID than to dialogue honestly. Those words are rhetorical tools to avoid discussing key issues. We have seen something similar in the recent election, in which "evangelical" was such a stigma word.

After reviewing early detractors of Darwin and Darwinism, Woodward turns to Michael Denton's *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis* (1986), the book that could be regarded as the birth of ID and that had a profound influence on ID proponents. Significantly, Denton did not deny Darwinian micro-evolution, focusing his attack instead on macro-evolution. According to Denton, neither the two fundamental axioms of Darwin's macro-evolutionary theory – the concept of continuity and the belief that all the adaptive design of life has resulted from a blind random process – has been validated by a single empirical discovery, certainly not by the fossil record.

In fact, strong Darwinists such as Stephen Jay Gould and Niles Eldridge had already acknowledged the inadequacy of the

fossil record and proposed instead "punctuated equilibrium." This meant that Darwin's gradualism was untenable. Instead, they suggested that there was a sudden jump (a moment of saltation) in a small isolated population, after which gradualism (stasis) continued. But in doing so, they abandoned continuity, a key notion of Darwinism.

ID proponents often make use of their opponents' pronouncements. Denton further argues that one cannot extrapolate macro-evolution from micro-evolution, as all Darwinists seem to do. His bold and destructive attack soon had Darwinists up in arms, but they could not attack him on his cosmology, since, remarkably, he did not provide a new one.

The second step in the movement came when Philip Johnson was on a sabbatical in London, where he happened to read Darwinist Richard Dawkins' *The Blind Watchmaker* and Denton's book. A law professor specializing in rhetoric of law, Johnson was convinced by Denton's arguments, and he began dialoguing about them with his colleagues at Berkeley and experts elsewhere. In 1991 he began writing about ID, first in *Darwin on Trial* (revised 1993) and later *Reason in the Balance* (1994), *Telling Darwinism* (1997), *Objections Sustained* (1998), *The Wedge of Truth* (2000), and *The Right Question* (2002). His books argue that macro-evolution has become a culturally and socially induced illusion.

For Johnson the philosophy of naturalism has become the central protagonist, whereas Denton had pushed that philosophy to the periphery. In other words, while Denton focused on Darwinian science, Johnson concentrated on metaphysics, the ultimate foundation of the Darwinian worldview. Johnson may not have contributed much to the scientific attack, but he transformed the rhetoric, suggesting that when Darwinism is brought into question, it is routinely protected by empty labels, semantic manipulations and faulty logic, and that Darwinism functions as the central cosmological myth of modern culture, as the centre-piece of a quasi-religious system.

The third stage of ID came in 1996. First David Berlinski, a Jewish intellectual, made a stinging attack in a Jewish paper. Michael Behe, a tenured biologist followed with *Darwin's Black Box*, in which he posits the notion of irreducible complexity. William Dembski, a mathematician, published his *Mere Creation*, whose "explanatory filter" provides a scientific tool to determine ID (he retold his findings in very technical language in 1999 in *The Design Inference*). And finally the movement was launched.

Woodward tells stories about how they arrived at their ID conclusions, stories that make the book very readable. The roads traveled differ significantly, but what they all have in common is that they came to the conviction that macro-evolution was not a "fact" as Darwinists in high school and uni-

versity texts teach.

Dembski's explanatory filter, providing the standard for assessing ID, has three levels, but only at the third, that is the statistically highly unusual, level is there a possibility of ID. According to Woodward, there are four dimensions to Dembski's work: 1) the filter places design theories in the context of currently accepted science; 2) the filter is a regulative procedure that projects caution; 3) it uses a principled system of statistical analysis; 4) it specifies some species of intelligence as the cause.

Notice again that there is no direct reference to God. If God often seems to be pushed aside, why then would I suggest that many in the Reformed tradition should read this book? In the first place, it's a good read, a story well-told. Secondly, the book also shows the weaknesses of Darwinism without the reader being required to have a thorough knowledge of science and Darwinism in particular. Thirdly, ID ideas are revolutionary, or, as Woodward calls his last chapter, "A Revolution Built on Recalcitrance."

Revolutionary ID may be, but as Woodward states, "The goal of Design was not to rewrite the script of academic life so as to insert a role for deity at any given point but rather to secure the freedom within the academy to range across all possible explanatory perspectives, including the one that entertains the possibility of God's existence" (204). At the present, that attempt is impeded by American academic biologists, 95 % of whom are Darwinists, even though only 9% of the general population holds to strict Darwinism. And these academic Darwinists have an important stake in upholding the prominence of Darwinism.

Finally, ID can easily be adapted to incorporate Christian ideas.

An interview with Dembski on the *Christianity Today*: <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2004/11/22.0.html>

An article in *First Things* by Dembski: <http://www.firstthings.com/ftissues/ft9810/dembski.html>

Many articles on Dembski's own home page: <http://www.designinference.com/>

Here are some lectures in audio format: <http://www.counterbalance.net/perspevo/index-frame.html>

For an excellent critique of Phillip Johnson, perhaps the most influential evangelical pushing intelligent design see this article by a Christian prof at the University of Alberta. There are many Christian critics and "fine tuners" of the theory. <http://www.ualberta.ca/~dlamoure/3Johnson.htm>

A list of 10 books exposing the failures of Darwinism. There are many more.

1. The Check Is in the Mail: Why Darwinism Fails to Inspire Confidence by Robert Koons
2. Darwinism as Dogma: The Establishment of Naturalism by Phillip E. Johnson
3. The Miracles of Darwinism by Marcel-Paul Schützenberger
4. Darwin Meets the Berenstain Bears: The Cultural Impact of Evolution by Nancy R. Pearcey
5. Teaching the Flaws in Neo-Darwinism by Edward Sisson
6. Accept No Imitations: The Rivalry of Naturalism and Natural Law by J. Budziszewski
7. A Catholic Scientist Looks at Darwinism and Design by Michael J. Behe
8. Why I Am Not a Darwinist by James Barham
9. Why Evolution Fails the Test of Science by Cornelius G. Hunter
10. The Deniable Darwin by David Berlinski

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## CRC Anatomy

# What's on our (your) mind?

Arie C. Leder

In *The Reformed Journal* of March 1957 Henry Stob published the first of four articles on "The Mind of the Church." Three minds exist in the Christian Church, wrote Stob, "modifying each other while they press their claims against each other and strive for hegemony." These minds, he argued, are best discerned in answering the question "How do we maintain truth and piety within the world?"

Although he admitted that "deep down" there were only two such minds, one negative and the other positive to the world, Stob settled on three, reasoning that "because of the predominance of the negative attitude, because of the duality of the fear-response, there are really three and not merely two, minds in the church. A predominantly negative or fearful attitude toward the world requires the adoption of a defensive stance. But defense can take two forms. It can take the form of withdrawal or the form of aggression. One may flee the world one fears, or one may launch an attack upon it. One may play 'safe,' or one may become 'militant.' In either case it is security that is primarily sought, and not positive outreach and redemptive action. Three minds then – the safe, the militant, and the positive – operate out of and upon the church and shape her complex personality" (186).

## Three minds in the CRCNA?

Stob was careful to note that these three minds existed in everyone, but in such a manner that one or another of these is dominant. Nevertheless, "from none of us is any one of them completely absent" (184). Although he spoke of the Christian Church in general, writing in the context of the CRCNA of the 1950's it is not beside the point to ask: Of whom and to whom was Stob speaking at that time?

Besides *The Banner* and *De Wachter*, church papers which served the membership of the CRCNA, two other journals sought to influence the mind of the CRCNA during the 1950's and the following decades: *The Reformed Journal* and *The Torch and Trumpet*. Although all his caveats apply, in terms of Stob's "minds" the latter journal was dominantly "militant" and the former dominantly "progressive," as replies to

Stob's *Reformed Journal* articles in *The Torch and Trumpet* seem to indicate. Nevertheless, by name Stob identified no one with any one of the three minds. Henry Zwaanstra did so in his *Reformed Thought and Experience in a New World. A Study of the Christian Reformed Church and its American Environment 1890-1918* (Kampen, 1973). But those concerned had long passed on to the church triumphant.

Zwaanstra also argues for three minds, which he associates with the leading figures of the period in question. He identifies the Confessional Reformed, the Separatist Calvinists, and the American Calvinists. The first was rooted in the Secession of 1834, the second influenced by Abraham Kuyper, and the third sought to move beyond a perceived theological and cultural isolationism to become more intentionally an American church with a particular reformed pedigree. Zwaanstra observes that by the end of the second decade of the 20th century the American Calvinists had clearly won control of the heart of the CRCNA.

Treating the RCA and CRCNA together, James Bratt (*Dutch Calvinism in Modern America*, 17-54) describes four "mentalities," three of which describe the CRC. Attitudinally he considers the mentalities as outgoing and optimistic or defensive and introverted; theologically and historically he understands them as Seceders and pietist or as Neo-Calvinist and Kuyperian. Each mentality is closely associated with a publication of the time. Thus, the RCA "west" mentality is outgoing, optimistic and pietist, represented by *The Leader*; the positive neo-Calvinists in the CRC and *The Banner*; the defensive, introverted and the confessionalist-Seceder mentality and *De Gereformeerde Amerikaan*; and, the antithetical, defensive and introverted neo-Calvinists with *De Gids* and *De Calvinist*. Louis Berkhof, Bratt argues, displaying an uncanny ability to express different aspects of the three mentalities of the CRC of his day, best represented the "composite picture of the Dutch-American mind of the time" in his writings.

## CRCNA survey said

By the end of the twentieth century, according to the CRCNA

survey of 2002, it was still possible to identify three minds in the CRCNA: doctrinalist, pietist, and transformational. The survey extrapolates these "mind indexes" from a list of elements respondents were asked to identify as important to being a Reformed Christian. The categories that define the doctrinalist mind are: viewing Scripture as inspired, infallible and authoritative; holding to the historic creeds of the church; understanding life as sin, salvation, and service; accepting the 5 points of Calvinism (TULIP). The transformationalist mind was determined by: developing world and life view that relates Christ to culture; obeying the cultural mandate; pursuing social justice in society; being a change agent in restoring the Kingdom of God. The elements linked to the pietist mind: having a personal relationship with Jesus; daily reading of the Bible; celebrating our new life in Christ; renewing life in the Holy Spirit.

As Stob argued, so the survey also shows that these three minds exist in all the respondents, but in such a manner that one or another is dominant. When data were extrapolated to indicate a full, moderate, or weak commitment to one of these minds, the results were as follows:

Full (F); Moderate (M); Weak (W)  
Transformationalist:  
19% (F) 29% (M) 52% (W)  
Doctrinalist:  
25% (F) 41% (M) 34% (W)  
Pietist:  
59% (F) 33% (M) 8% (W)

## Where are we today?

At the beginning of the 21st century the survey suggests the CRCNA is generally more pietist, than doctrinal, and more doctrinal than transformationalist. Which mind sets the course of direction for the CRCNA? At the end of the second decade of the 20th century the American Calvinists were firmly in control, according to Zwaanstra, and Bratt holds up Louis Berkhof's writings as best representing the composite mentality of the CRC through the 1940s.

The survey's figures suggest that the dominant CRC mind at the end of the 20th century is largely pietist of the evangelical kind with a moderate doctrinal interest with a politically and culturally correct accent on the transformational. Is it still confessionally doctrinal? Is it

positive and outgoing or defensive and introverted? Is the transformationalism Americanizing and outgoing or separatist and defensive? The survey provides no direction, but these are questions worth further reflection.

The 2002 CRC survey identified pietist, doctrinalist, and transformational minds. In some sense these can be understood as continuations of the minds identified by Stob, Zwaanstra, and Bratt. That same year, however, an article by Cornelis P. Venema in *Christian Renewal* suggested that there were only two minds.

## Leading up to the two minds

Discussion of the contemporary mind of the CRC must consider the formative events that took place during the 1970s through to the 1990s. These were decades of some upheaval, transformation, and especially a struggle for setting the theological direction of the CRC.

During that time the editorship of *The Banner* moved away from what the CRC survey identified as the doctrinalist orientation, especially as represented by John Vander Ploeg and Lester De Koster. Although not anti-doctrinalist, Andrew Kuyvenhoven's subsequent tenure coincided and connected with the deep desire for change – latent since shortly after World War II – that began to surface during the late 1960s. Emblematic was Kuyvenhoven's "Burn the Wooden Shoes" issue.

Deep-seated differences, tensions, and pressures for change in the CRC also surfaced in the polemics between *The Reformed Journal* and *The Torch and Trumpet*, the Synodical report on worldly entertainment (dancing at Calvin College), the hilariously satirical *The Bananer*, anti-Viet Nam war protests on Calvin's Franklin and Knollcrest campuses, and the appointment of Wesley Smedes as denominational minister of evangelism, to name but a few. In addition to the debates about pentecostalism, biblical hermeneutics and women in office, the membership drain during those decades contributed to a change of the CRC's mind, as did the journalism of *Christian Renewal* and *The Outlook* (formerly *The Torch and Trumpet*).

Before the major exodus of the 1990s, members were already leaving the CRCNA for non-Re-

formed evangelical churches. Neopentecostalism and an increasing evangelicalism were the contributing factors: First Assembly of God and Calvary Udenominational in Grand Rapids, Michigan, for example, were major recipients of the CRC's disaffected. The majority of those who left the CRCNA during the late 1980s and 1990s, however – now occupying the pews of the United Reformed Church (URC), what remains of the Orthodox CRC (OCRC), or those who have remained independent Reformed churches – came from the ranks of what the 2002 survey would identify as doctrinalists.

Did all the doctrinalists abandon the CRCNA to leave the pietists and transformationalists battle it out for its 21st century identity? Not so, for although he clearly belongs to the doctrinalist stream, Venema is a member and ordained minister of the CRC. He also believes, correctly, that he is not alone. His sober claim is simply that those who might echo the past to define the denomination's present, let's call these the doctrinalists, would be drowned out by the clamor of the other two minds.

## The two minds

Venema's "The Christian Reformed Church Today – a denomination in search of an identity" (*Christian Renewal* [August 12, 2002], 10-11) offers an "impressionistic" view of the CRC in the afterglow of the congenial Synod of 2002 (Bert Witvoet, "Synod 2002: A Congenial Synod that Moves Gingerly toward Antioch," *The Banner*; briefly discussed by Venema). After reviewing several of that synod's decisions – WARC membership, Lord's Day 80, pastoral care for homosexuals, denominational loyalty, and women's ordination – all suggestive of the CRC's direction, Venema records his impressions about the CRC's new identity.

## What we once were

It was time to burn the wooden shoes, argues Venema; the ethnically Dutch CRC could not expect to prosper as a community in late 20th century North America. Earlier conservatives' attempts to preserve the old order, whether these ways were "genuinely expressive of biblical and Reformed convictions or not," were bound to fail.

Cont. on p. 7...



## History

# Learning history in Nicaragua

Stephen Herrick  
PC(USA) mission co-worker

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — As I reflect on two and a half years of living in Nicaragua, it occurs to me that I've learned a lot about history.

Nicaraguan history is colorful — full of dictators like Zelaya and Somoza, revolutionaries like Sandino and Fonseca, and, repeated invasions by the U.S. Marines. But, rather, I've learned about U.S. and European history.

I understand the Great Depression. Of course, the economic situation here is far worse than it ever was in the United States, but it doesn't stand out as much, because our Depression followed a decade of unprecedented prosperity, whereas here, the poverty grinds on, generation after generation.

There are "Okies" today, only now we call them "illegal immigrants." They follow the same pattern: leave everything you've ever known to go to a far-off place, only to find you're cruelly exploited, assuming you can find work at all.

I understand the Dust Bowl. I've seen the dust here billow up in thick, opaque clouds. It gets into everything — your food, your papers, your hair, your eyes, your lungs. In the United States, the Dust Bowl was the

result of a drought. Here, there is still plenty of rain, but because of sixty years of large- and small-scale deforestation, it runs right off, leaving the land as dry and thirsty as it was before.

I understand the sweatshops that early social reformers railed against. Like DDT, sweatshops were banned in the United States, so they came here. The casual observer won't see the obvious effects of 100 years ago, because the sweatshops here don't use coal or heavy machinery, but there are serious problems just the same.

They employ mostly young women, who tend to be the most compliant workers. In spite of this, managers seem to find it necessary to shove them, shout at them, hit them, deny them bathroom breaks, and arbitrarily dock their pay.

In addition to dismal pay for long, hard hours, the workers also suffer from damaged vision, damaged hearing, intestinal problems, respiratory problems, arthritis, and miscarriages, not to mention the social cost of having young wives and mothers away from their families for 10, 12, sometimes 14 hours at a time. The managers of these latter-day sweatshops have read their history as well, however, and have undermined any thought of collec-

tive bargaining much earlier than their predecessors.

I understand the Old West. People here still ride horses, carry guns, plow their fields by hand, and slaughter their own animals. Many still do not have running water or electricity. Cattle-rustling is a common problem. Vigilante justice is a common solution.

Going back much further, I even have some understanding of the Middle Ages. I see now how an entire society can revolve around the interests of a few extremely rich families, who jostle and jockey to climb over each other in the search for power. They live in opulence, paid for by the labor and suffering of the poor, who have only their deprivation for compensation.

Yet, the poor divide themselves according to which rich camp they identify with. It helps that the leaders of the Catholic church continue their millennium-long tradition of bestowing their favor on the most well-established and generous of the rich, in flagrant disregard of gospel values. (As in every age, there are local Catholic priests here opposed to this practice.)

Going back farther still, I understand what life must have been like in a colony, such as first-century Israel. There would have been overt



The new cathedral of Managua. The earthquake of 1973 destroyed the original cathedral as well as much of Managua.

reminders of its colonial status, such as foreign troops on its soil.

Almost as bad, however, would have been the more subtle invasions, such as imperial currency and language.

The worst part of all would have been hearing one's own leaders talk about how important it was to maintain good relations with the empire, meaning that the colony needed to do anything the empire said without questioning.

I have seen all these things firsthand. I am left with the same realization that strikes me on a regular basis: what an island of comfort and

stability the United States is. I feel privileged to have been able to use my education and skills to contribute my "grain of sand," as we say here, towards the building of the Kingdom of God.

There is much work to be done, though, before we have an entire world that enjoys peace and prosperity, well-being, and dignity, comfort and stability. My only prayer for the future is to continue to be able to work for such a world.

Stephen Herrick is a mission co-worker for the Presbyterian Church (USA), which first published this story on the Internet.

...cont. from p. 6

Thus, when Venema observes that the new CRCNA is no longer following "in the paths laid down by those who were instrumental in its beginnings," he has in mind a "number of good and wonderful features of the old CRC that are no longer the case: a steady (though not spectacular) growth in number of members; a generally loyal and enthusiastic support for denominational or denominationally-related institutions; a sense of unity in the faith and in the common work to which the churches of the denomination were committed; a remarkable degree of trust throughout the denomination that was forged from a solid confidence in mutually held convictions; a fairly clear sense of identity, which was preserved through a network of schools and educational institutions for which a remarkable level of support existed; and a strong sense of self-identity regarding what it means to be a Reformed believer or church."

He concludes: "You do not have to adduce all the evidence, gather the anecdotes, and contemplate the

statistics, to have a kind of intuitive grasp that something good and precious has been lost."

## What we are trying to be

"Positively," Venema argues, "the new CRC focuses upon what I would call the denomination's lack of a recognized identity." Ask any number of CRCNA members "how they would identify or define what is unique about the present CRC. My guess is that their answers would confirm a deep schizophrenia within the denomination." The two sides of this new search for denominational identity Venema identifies as the evangelical right and the main-line-leaning left. What these share is an opposition "to an identity for the Christian Reformed Church that would emphasize its confessionally Reformed past."

The evangelical right wants more members in the CRCNA; evangelism is its banner. In order to achieve this goal the CRC must break loose from its introverted past and reach out with the gospel. Specifically, argues Venema, this

means rejecting "what is an obstacle to evangelism (e.g. adherence to a Reformed Church Order, emphasizing the importance of confessional church membership, advocating the cause of Christian education, following a traditional pattern of worship)." If this group's aspiration were to be fulfilled, the CRCNA would become merely another conservative evangelical denomination "in the sea of North American evangelicalism."

The main-line-leaning left wants the CRC to be "more congenial to the main-line churches and their organizations." Not as numerous as the evangelical right, this group nevertheless has significant influence in the denomination due to its "inordinate representation in positions of leadership and on denominational boards (not to mention more aggressive posturing and pushing for its agenda)." Members of this group have argued for the "ordination of women, a more inclusive approach to ecumenical relations; a more open and accepting attitude toward homosexual persons; and a more direct involvement in social

justice and human rights issues." Venema concludes that if this group's wishes were to be fulfilled, becoming a "somewhat more conservative, evangelical member of the main-line churches ... would represent a huge step forward as compared to the parochialisms of the past."

## Mind and direction

Venema is not concerned to deny the existence of three minds, as the 2002 survey suggests. He is not concerned about the number of minds in the CRC, but about which mind sets the course for the CRC in the 21st century. On that level, he argues, there are only two minds: one represented by the many, the other by a tenacious and loud few. You may quibble with his description of the few and the many, but Venema has correctly pointed to the shape of contemporary battle for the mind and direction of the CRC.

In this he is not alone. For example, in a recent convocation address at Calvin Theological Seminary, "Shifting Visions of the Christian Life," Calvin P. Van Reken ar-

gues that the CRC has exchanged its former identity, one shaped by a biblical fear of the world, for a pot of culture friendliness that fails to echo the important traditions of the CRC. Van Reken's culture-friendly mind, it seems to me, coincides with Venema's main-line leaning left. Historically the practitioners of such culture-friendly attitudes belong to the categories descriptive of Stob's positive mind, Zwaansstra's American Calvinists, and Bratt's Positive Calvinists. In Bratt's terms, this mind is outgoing and positive, not defensive and introverted.

If Venema is right, the struggle for the identity of the CRCNA in the 21st century is between the evangelical right and the main-line leaning left. Which of these two minds is setting the direction of the CRCNA?

## Part II next week

Stob's essay is published in: Henry Stob, *Theological Reflections* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981). Van Reken's speech is available on the Calvin Seminary website: [www.calvinseminary.edu/ConvocationAddress2003.pdf](http://www.calvinseminary.edu/ConvocationAddress2003.pdf)



## Church

### Christians hail new PM's plan to support minorities in India

Anto Akkara

New Delhi (ENI) – Indian churches have welcomed the plans of new Prime Minister Manmohan Singh for minorities who faced harrowing times under the previous government led by the Bharatiya Janata Party, which was accused of following a Hindu nationalist agenda.

Singh, at the end of July, used his first foreign trip as prime minister to reaffirm that he needed the cooperation of all communities to build a new India free from the fear of war and exploitation.

Addressing the Indian community in the Thai capital of Bangkok on July 29 he recalled the words of an Indian independence fighter, Subhash Chandra Bose, who said, "We are Indians first, and Sikhs, Muslims, Christians afterwards."

Earlier in July, Singh's United Progressive Alliance coalition government had announced steps to improve the welfare of minorities, including reserving a quota of government jobs for religious minorities, and providing government funds and recognition to minority educational institutions.

"We are very happy with these measures," said Bishop Jeyapaul David, president of the National Council of Churches in India, who had attended the seminar on minority rights on July 4 at which Prime Minister Singh, a Sikh, announced the proposals.

The new pro-minority measures have come as "a relief to the minorities after six years of neglect and harassment" under the BJP-led government, David told Ecumenical News International.

Mani Jacob, general secretary of the All-India Association for Christian Higher Education, an ecumenical forum of 250 Christian colleges, also welcomed the proposals.

"The welfare and empowerment of minorities can be achieved by giving them equal and sometimes preferential opportunities for serving the nation," he said.

Christians account for 2.3 per cent of India's one billion population, but about 20,000 Christian schools offer education to nearly 10 per cent of India's students. Just more than 80 per cent of Indians are Hindu, 12 per cent are Muslim, 1.9 per cent Sikh, and 2.5 per cent belong to other religious groups including Buddhist, Jain, and Parsi.

### Latin American 'Apostles' stir up controversy

Manuel Quintero

Quito (ENI) – Evangelical Christians in Latin America are at loggerheads over the tendency of some spiritual leaders to call themselves "apostles" thereby suggesting they have received a direct mandate from God.

Many Latin American Protestant leaders find the idea of someone calling themselves an "apostle" contrary to the doctrine of the Reformation, believing that only the disciples of Jesus should be called apostles as people who have received special gifts from the Holy Spirit.

"The notion reflects a false understanding of the Bible," said Rev. Israel Batista, a Methodist pastor and general secretary of the Latin American Council of Churches (CLAI). "But as well as a lack of solid theological foundations we find the issue of power, something

that has not been adequately dealt with in our churches.

"Thus we have Evangelical groups adopting leadership schemes that are more hierarchical than those of the Roman Catholic Church, and failing to acknowledge that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are for the sake of service and not for personal power," noted Batista.

For Elias Rincon, who calls himself an apostle and is president of Unicristiana, a body grouping more than 100 Pentecostal churches in Venezuela, a strict hierarchy is necessary to avoid "disarray" among Evangelical churches.

"Democracy as such does not function inside the church," Rincon told Ecumenical News International. "The church should be ruled by a theocratic government, according to the biblical ministries and charismas [spiritual gifts]."

Take the Apostolic Network for Agape Ministries (RAMA) in Argentina. It praises its leader, Apostle Bernardo Godoy, by saying he received a vision from God "to create a network of ministries, associated in unity and friendship for apostles, prophets, teachers, pastors and psalmists".

Not all Pentecostal Christians, however, approve of using the term apostle to enforce a strict hierarchy and to suggest that leaders have received a direct commission from God.

What most of the new apostles have forgotten, suggests the Rev. Ricardo Godim, a pastor with the Assembly of God in Sao Paulo, Brazil, is that the ministry of the apostle is not to seek power, nor religious status, "but to take care of the poor and to be in solidarity with the suffering of the widows and orphans."

### Somali Christians feel abandoned, pressured to join Islam

Fredrick Nzwill

Nairobi (ENI) – The plight facing Somalia's tiny Christian minority was highlighted recently at a peace conference in the Kenyan capital as delegates told of pressures to convert them to Islam and how they felt abandoned by those abroad who follow their faith.

Delegates attending the Somali Peace and Reconciliation Conference, in June in Nairobi, said that facing renewed pressure to abandon Christianity for Islam led them to feel as if the international Christian community was neglecting them.

glecting them.

The Somali National Reconciliation Conference closed with the creation of a transitional federal government, intended to end 13 years of anarchy that have beset Somalia since the collapse of the regime of former president Mohamed Siad Barre in 1991.

The delegates said two senior Christian leaders were reported to be praying in Mosques, protesting the lack of support from Christians in other parts of the world.

Speaking at the conference, Dr Ahmed Abdi, the leader of the So-

mali Christian Community, said the two leaders had left under unclear circumstances. "They are no longer with us," he told Ecumenical News International in Nairobi. "It looks like they have been influenced through finances and politics."

Abdi said Somalis were re-aligning themselves to take up leadership positions in the country as the conference entered a home stretch, with the formation of a government in a country that has had no central government for 13 years.

"They don't see why they

### Catholics and Mennonites to look at martyrs of the Reformation era



Burning of 6 brothers and 2 sisters in Amsterdam

Chris Herlinger

New York (ENI) – Mennonite and Roman Catholic scholars met in Collegeville, Minnesota July 26 to 28 to launch a landmark study of 16th-century Christian martyrs, an event organizers hope will lead to the creation of a permanent institute on the subject.

The growing scholarly interest in the subject requires a continuing dialogue, noted Ivan Kauffman, a Washington DC-based author, and one of the organizers of the conference titled Sixteenth Century Martyrdom in Ecumenical Perspective. "The scholars involved are committed to that," Kauffman told Ecumenical News International.

Mennonites trace their roots to the 16th-century Dutch Reformer Menno Simons, a former Roman Catholic priest who was part of a radical Protestant movement in Europe called the Anabaptists, or re-baptisers, thousands of whom were killed or tortured during the 16th century, both by Roman Catholics and by other Protestants.

Catholic, Mennonite and other Protestant churches have all kept

historical accounts of the period alive within their different traditions, but there has so far been no attempt to weave the differing interpretations of the era into a single narrative, Kauffman noted.

The Minnesota conference continued the work of an earlier event, held in July 2003 at Saint John's Abbey in Minnesota after five years of ecumenical dialogue between the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the Mennonite World Conference.

This year's conference expanded the scope of the study to include the entire range of Christian martyrdom that occurred during the Reformation.

"It's a huge event [in church history] and yet it's surprising how little we know about what happened in the 16th century," Kauffman said.

Given the vagaries of conflicting historical interpretation, developing such a narrative will not be an easy task, as it involves reckoning with "skeletons in the closet," Kauffman acknowledged. "This will take years of work," he said.

should remain committed when their Christian brothers are not supporting them financially as the Muslims are doing," said one delegate, who identified himself as being with the Somali Christian Community.

The Christian delegates said that in the past they had resisted recruitment attempts, often tied to promises of substantial financial support and scholarships by Islamic groups.

Commenting on whether the Somali Christians had failed to get support, the deputy general sec-

retary of the National Christian Council of Kenya, Oliver Kisaka Simiyu, said: "The delegates have had a difficult time. We have been trying to find space for them. We have been providing accommodation, transport and food support for 30 of them in the conference as observers."

The Somali Christians have been urging the international Christian community to assist them in reviving Christianity in the country where 99.5 per cent of the estimated 8 million people are said to be Muslim.



## Church

### Indonesian pastor assassinated in front of her congregation

Central Sulawesi (ANS) – Rev. Susianti Tinulele of the Presbyterian Christian Church of Central Sulawesi (GKST) in Palu was shot dead while speaking from the pulpit during the 6 p.m. service on Sunday, July 18.

Five masked men on motorbike, opened fire with machine guns on the preacher and worship team. Rev. Susianti was shot in the head and died instantly. Four teenage worshippers were hospitalized with serious injuries and a 17-year-old girl has since died.

Witnesses said about five men on two motorcycles approached the Effata Presbyterian Church at about 7 p.m. Three of the men waited outside, while the two others stood at the church entrance. One, described as "calm, unhurried and professional," opened fire with an automatic weapon, killing the Rev. Susianti Tinulele, aged 29, who had just completed her sermon, then sped away.

Rev. Susianti is the latest victim of what appears to be a campaign to assassinate Christian leaders in Central Sulawesi which began in November 2003. She had taken food to GKST pastor Rinaldy Damanik in prison two days before her death, and her support for him may be one reason why she was targeted.

Central Sulawesi's police chief believes the campaign to kill prominent Christian figures may be an attempt to disrupt this year's elections in Indonesia. When police arrested suspected Jemaah Islamiyah militants last year they found detailed descriptions of church services and lists of Christian officials.

Violence is also directed against Sulawesi Christians who are not church leaders. The night before Rev. Susianti's death, Mrs Helmy Tombiling (35) died from nine stab wounds to her chest and stomach, which were inflicted by attackers outside her home in Poso. Christians fear a new round of religious conflict.

The attack took place in the provincial town of Palu in eastern Indonesia's Sulawesi province where some 2000 people died in bloody clashes between Muslims and Christians in 2000 and 2001.

President Megawati Soekarnoputri met Christian leaders on 20 July, and promised them police would capture the perpetrators, while appealing for calm. Condemnation also came from Central Sulawesi's Indonesian Ulama Council chairman S. Saggaf Aljufrie, who called for a meeting to pre-



A policeman guards the church where Rev. Susianti Tinulele was killed.

vent the situation from worsening.

Ruyandi Hutasoit, chairman of the Christian-based Prosperous Peace Party appealed to Christians not to carry out revenge attacks against Muslims. "We call on all sides to keep to themselves and not to carry out acts of retaliation, because only God has the right of retaliation," he said.

Nathan Setiabudi, chairman of the Indonesian Communion of Churches, grouping Indonesian Protestants, said after the meeting with Megawati and Hutasoit that the church shootings were a purely criminal matter and not religiously motivated.

But in Jakarta, Home Affairs Minister Hari Sabarno was quoted as saying the gunmen were attempting to re-ignite religious conflict. Christians account for about 8 per cent of the 238 million people in Indonesia, the world's largest Muslim nation.

The International Crisis Group (ICG) published a report in February 2004 detailing the extensive involvement of Jemaah Islamiyah and other militant groups in the region. The report also notes that systematic one-sided violence against overwhelmingly non-Muslim victims is continuing. CSW visited the region in June and found genuine support and the wish for reconciliation at grassroots level. However, the situation remains tense and both communities were concerned about the presidential elections and upcoming local elections. It was also evident that hard-line militants continue to dominate certain areas in Central Sulawesi and appear to be able to operate with relative impunity. Little or no action is taken to bring the perpetrators to justice.

[Additional information added from ENI and ICG stories.]

### South African council admits church that once justified apartheid

Peter Fabricius

Johannesburg (ENI) – South Africa's Dutch Reformed Church, once notorious for supporting apartheid, this week returned to the family of South African churches after an absence of some four decades.

The South African Council of Churches (SACC), representing most denominations in the country, admitted the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) as a full member.

"We are glad to announce that the Dutch Reformed Church had been accepted as a full member of the council," the new SACC president, Professor Russel Botman, said during the council's triennial conference in Johannesburg. "We value their contribution during the last three years when they had observer status."

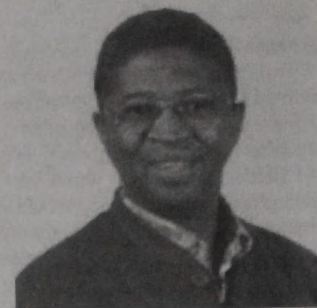
The DRC is the church of most Afrikaans-speaking South Africans, including members of the former white National Party government, which implemented the apartheid policy of racial segrega-

tion from 1948 until it handed over power to the present African National Congress-led government in 1994.

The DRC provided a theological justification for apartheid. It broke with most other South African churches after the World Council of Churches conference at Cottesloe in Johannesburg in 1960 issued a statement questioning the biblical and moral justification for apartheid.

South Africa's then prime minister, Hendrik Verwoerd, forced the DRC to dissociate itself with the statement and the church then cut ties with the WCC and also left the South African Christian Council, of which it had been a founding member. The Christian Council dissolved to become the SACC in 1968.

The DRC had been suspended from membership of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches in 1982 because of what was declared the church's "heretical" support for apartheid.



SACC president, Russel Botman

That suspension was lifted in 1998, four years after the coming to power of the ANC-led government, when the church's general synod rejected "apartheid as wrong and sinful, not simply in its effects and operations, but also in its fundamental nature."

SACC spokesman Joe Mdhlela said the DRC had been given observer status in the SACC after it had "openly distanced itself from apartheid and categorically confessed that all apartheid policies were heresy".

### US Presbyterian Church draws Jewish criticism for resolutions on Israel

Chris Herlinger

New York (ENI) – Resolutions by the Presbyterian Church (USA) on Israel and Christian-Jewish relations – including one that calls for "selective" divestment from firms that do business in Israel – have triggered a stinging rebuke from US Jewish groups.

The criticism has been so heated – and phone calls and emails to the church's national headquarters in Louisville, Kentucky, so intense – the denomination has been forced to issue a public clarification on actions taken during the Presbyterians' general assembly held in Richmond, Virginia June 26 – July 3.

B'nai B'rith, a Jewish group, called the resolutions "offensive" and urged that Jewish groups end all interfaith dialogue with the Presbyterians until they are rescinded.

The resolutions cover wide concerns. Domestic ones include continued denominational funding for ministries intended for Jewish converts to Christianity, as well as another that says Christian Zionism – the belief that Israel must control the Holy Land before Christ returns to Earth – is not consistent with Presbyterian theological tradition.

The international resolutions call for an end to Israel's separation barrier, meant to shut out Pales-

tinians, that has garnered criticism from the United Nations and World Court, among others.

But the general assembly's decision to explore what Clifton Kirkpatrick, the denomination's stated clerk (chief executive), called "selective divestment" of church funds from firms "whose business in Israel is found to be directly or indirectly causing harm or suffering to innocent people, Palestinian or Israel" is seen as more controversial.

The move was not, Kirkpatrick said, towards "a blanket divestment from companies that do business in Israel" – as some reporting had indicated. The denomination asked for a study on the question by March 2005.

"These actions are rooted in a longstanding commitment to the secure existence of Israel and the Israeli people, in a similar commitment to the security and existence of Palestinians in their own state, and in a passionate vision of negotiated peace as the only viable way forward," Kirkpatrick said in a July 20 statement.

James Rudin, a religious adviser to the American Jewish Committee, said he was "angry" about the resolutions, and in particular found the divestment question troubling, as it conjured a link with similar

actions against the former white-minority government of South Africa, a major drive for US churches, such as the Presbyterians, in the 1970s and 1980s.

"I reject that [comparison with apartheid South Africa] completely," Rudin told Ecumenical News International, saying it was a "false equation". The Presbyterians, he said, had not taken similar moves against other Middle Eastern countries – such as Saudi Arabia, Iran and Syria – that do not enjoy good human rights records. "I have said again, again and again that Israel has been singled out for special animus," Rudin said.

[Earlier this summer the Synod of the Reformed Church in America also adopted a report and statement critical of Israel. It condemned Christian Zionism of the sort found in the popular Left Behind series of novels as "impediments to peace in the Middle East."

The RCA report cautions that the Bible gets applied to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, not by assuming that one side has a divine right to real estate, but by insisting that both sides are accountable to the biblical teachings of justice, care for the marginalized, reconciliation across the dividing lines of race, and peace. It did not advise divestment, however.



## Storytelling

## Sharing my mother's story, immigrant to immigrant

Johanna Kuyvenhoven

In September, 2000 the New Westminster Christian Reformed Church's Adult Education committee embarked on a project called "Translation of our Immigrant Story." Under the direction of their pastors at that time, Dan Devadatta and Al Helder, they talked about how opening up the church's past immigrant experience would open ways to connect with the many new comers who now live in the church neighborhood. Refugees and just ordinary people looking for new opportunities now crowd the building with languages, clothing, cooking smells, architecture and gardens that suggest the whole world is gathered into a single neighborhood.

The church is perched on the long hill that rises from the Fraser river on the south east side of Vancouver. The church was formed more than 50 years ago by new immigrants, mostly from Holland. Today it is much more diverse. Most members don't identify themselves as Dutch immigrants. During coffee after church you might hear a sprinkling of accents, but they aren't all Dutch ones. But the crowd inside doesn't look like the neighborhood outside.

Wilma Bouma took charge of the project to make the church more responsive to the needs of its neighbors. With an uncommonly active committee she learned everything she could about the situations of immigrants in Canada today. They experience economic hardship, social alienation, difficult memories and anguish about those left behind, loneliness and family breakdown. Immigrant parents and their growing children lose a common language and experience. Wilma invited Dr. Harry Van Belle, who studied the Dutch immigrant experience, to help their committee think about how Dutch immigrants might help the church connect better with its neighborhood.

The committee decided to begin by collecting and sharing the immigration stories of the church's own members. Storytelling would help them share themselves and witness to God's hand on their lives. Wilma also felt sure that telling our stories would help neighbors tell their own. This would help us to know and love our neighbors better. In a church built by immigrants, who knew much about loss, struggle and alienation, wouldn't this be an especially strong way of connecting?

Late in the Spring of 2003 a team of interviewers collected stories from several people. Many of the interviewees hadn't talked about these events for a long time. For some it was an emotional, even difficult thing to do. For nearly all of the committee and church members, telling the stories of their lives was an uncommon and uncomfortable act.

Don't misunderstand. They were not reluctant. They were eager and their stories were dramatic, courageous, humorous and inspiring. The storytellers simply had no practice of relating their experiences as a story. Their families, neighbors, their friends don't often say, "Tell me the story of how you got here." In a culture that replaces stories with information and storytelling with the news or a video, the art of telling a story is a bit rusty.

Wilma and I decided to make the booklet and let it serve as a beginning. We hope that this book may begin helping people talk to each other in new ways. Already there are several signs of this: richer encounters at coffee break, new kinds of talk over the fence with a Chinese neighbor and so on.

Wilma led me to think about my parent's stories. Growing up, I lived with the stories and lingering traces of immigrant experience. My children did too. We knew our family "left home." My mother's family suffered years of hardship and loneliness. For a long time they felt different, awkward and anxious about whether this place could become home.

In fact, as I listened more closely to my mother's story, I

was shocked to realize how similar her story is to those who come from Iran, Palestine, Tibet and the Philippines. The latter want simple things: safety, peace and survival. Like those who left Holland after WW II, they came to Canada in the hope of being able to care for their families, make a home, work in fair circumstances, worship and play in freedom. But my parents' stories also offer hope, examples of love, faithfulness and laughter, and a witness to the power of Christian community.

We need to tell our stories to each other and to ourselves. Stories join people with each other. Significantly, Jesus told stories to teach. The fuller complexity of a question, problem, and solution is opened in a story. Stories also connect the body of believers with each other in strong, but ordinary human ways. Our stories help us to reach out to each other from the heart and listen from the heart. They open windows on each other and teach us love. Afterwards, we act in a wisdom that grows in stories, understandings, empathy, wonder and surprise about each other. The image of God in us becomes more faceted and beautiful.

I am a storyteller, but that means firstly that I am a listener. I can encourage you and your church best by telling the story I heard from my mother. Her story vividly demonstrates the similarity with refugees and immigrants today. Her story testifies to God's guiding hand. Her story leaves the reader knowing that 'just a story' draws strangers and friends nearer to each other's heart. It helps make church.

My mother, Ena Heerema left Holland after the Second World War. She was engaged to marry my father, but life in Canada was so hard that my mom decided to stay and help her family survive. My father, afraid of losing that beautiful woman, dropped his studies and family in The Netherlands to rush to Canada and marry her. My dad, Andrew Kuyvenhoven, stayed in Canada and answered the need for pastors in immigrant Canada. He enriched my life and that of many others by being a faithful husband, father, preacher, and teacher.

And my mother made all our lives possible. More than fifty years have passed since their wedding. Since then, they have raised 6 children, celebrated 6 more weddings and the births of 15 grandchildren. My mom and dad have lived well over half a century. They tasted much joy, sorrow, anguish, loss and triumph.

About four years ago my mother lay tossing in the valley of the shadow of death with cancer. I was blessed enough to stay with her for a few months then. When she was strong enough, she told me stories about her life, which I recorded on tape. To our joy and amazement, God saved her to remain a witness to God's steadfast love and healing to her family even in her weak and often pain-riddled life. She remains God's hand of comfort and warmth to me.

Following are some excerpts from my mother's story. I have written these memories as she spoke them. The power of a living good story needs no embellishment. My mother spoke in short sentences, interrupted by the ravages of the illness. And yet, this story and storyteller shine. Amazing Grace

The "Kist" arrives



## Part I

On the roof of our apartment, in Groningen, my Father had a hobby. He had bees. He kept about six or seven beehives there. We could get up there by going up a stair and then out a window onto the roof. I am still amazed that my dad took all those little kids, there were 10 of us, you know, there up on the roof. I get a stomach ache to think about it now!

Those bees gave us marvelous honey throughout the year. But it was also interesting just being on the roof. My dad would point out interesting things you could see from the roof. Later, much later on, as the war got on, when we were on the roof we could see Germany and German cities burning. One of those was Hamburg. It was terrible.

Yes, I remember the war. But I can't remember it in a neat chronology. So much happened. Things are very jumbled in my mind. The soldiers, the unrest, people being scared. I was just 11, 12 and 13 years old. Soldiers would come and suddenly search a house. My opa was shot by the Germans. My mother's oldest brother was a well-known resistance leader, and the Germans were always trying to find him. So they would come to our house in the middle of the night, or any time, to see if he was there.

My dad would distract them in our living room. There was a little cupboard about six inches deep connected by a glass house to the outside. Inside you could see bees working. The males, the drones, and how they went in and out. That would distract the Germans for a little while. If we were warned on time, we would flee over the roof tops to a friend's or neighbor's house.

Food was hard to come by. Clothes were hard to come by. After school my task was take apart old clothing and blankets for knitting. To tell you the truth, I didn't mind that work. I found it kind of pleasant. I would sit with my mom and a cup of tea and. As a rule, we would come home from school and we would have tea with milk with mom.

And we had a hard time to get heat. It was cold a lot. The only heat source we had was in the living room. So, what did we do? We were all in that room, one room together, where we all studied our school work and talked. There would have been 10 or 11 people in that one room.

And then, oh, oh, the nights. At night the planes would



## Storytelling

Girls with "Kist"



go overhead, roaring over our house. The English planes going to Germany. The soldiers occupying our city would use anti-air craft guns, trying to shoot them down before they got to Germany. Often the planes let their bombs fall on us. I remember the noise very well. The bombs would miss us sometimes by just a second. We would measure how long it took for the bomb to fall by counting.

The stove had lots of company. Every morning before we went to school, Mother would comb our hair. The fashion was to have big bows in our hair. Mother would rub the bow along the edge of the stove and that is how it would be ironed. That is also where we would learn our songs. That is where I began every morning – Mother putting a ribbon in my hair, Mother singing a song and teaching us songs.

Was it a happy time? No, but we were together. That is what makes the difference in this world. There was more family around the corner and we had other family elsewhere. We had people around us. You know, I think about those German soldiers living in our town with us all those three years. They had to have some feelings about us too. Can you imagine three years of living somewhere, then going back to your own home that was also destroyed and changed? They had to go back somewhere after three years of living with us.

Near the end of the war, our electricity was cut off. Our light depended on one bike, standing on a mattress to cut down the noise. We played cards most of the evenings. The only time voices would be raised is when someone was pedaling too slow and the light went off.

It took the allies four days and three nights to liberate Groningen. We were so close to the shelling. The noise went on and on and on. All day long it went on. Finally, around lunch time on the second day, it was quiet. So we said to each other, "Now, why don't we eat." So the table was set. Imagine, when all that is going on, the table being set. And we were going to have a little something to eat. We were just about ready to sit down together to eat and Dad said, "Let's close those heavy sliding doors." That was a set of doors that separated the living and dining room.

No sooner had we all just sat down, when a shell hit. It hit the house. The windows shattered and those sliding doors had about a thousand pock marks. The whole house was sieved with shrapnel just before we had lunch. We didn't sit at that table for lunch after that.

That was surely the Lord's protection that day.

Then the fighting came very close. We kind of lived under the mattresses in the bedrooms. All the mattresses filled the bedroom and all of us underneath. Phil and I were the brave ones; we were sitting next to them. It got so bad that the two old people who were living in the apartment underneath us came up to us. I still don't know why we were all on the second floor and not on the first floor.

Then the soldiers came. It was street fighting. Mostly tanks too. The sound of the shells I will never forget. When I saw

Private Ryan, I knew those sounds.

In May 1945 the war was finished.... I don't have many memories of the liberation except the feeling of being free. And we had our electricity back. Remember we had the bike? The bike for light in the living room where we all lived. Somebody biking with one wheel in the air and all the yelling that went on when somebody stopped pedaling? But, no more now.

### Part II

I was engaged to your dad. After much talking, it was decided that I would go along to Canada for one year. One of the reasons I had to come along was because I knew English. Well, then we had all the busy preparation to get ready for immigration. Paper and packing. Achhh, when I think of all the things we left behind, I almost can't stand it. Since it was April when we went, we went with most of our warmer clothes, not thinking that it would be six weeks until we would get our things from Holland. Innoculations. Saying goodbye, having family say goodbye.

A time of partying, saying farewell to family. At that time we thought it was the end of ever seeing each other.

How did I personally feel about it – about leaving Dries [her fiancé] and Holland? I thought it just had to be done. I had to come along. I set my mind that was the way it had to be.

First, we came to Quebec. The teenagers, who could speak some English, translated for customs, immigration and so on. Then we got on a train, three days and two nights from Quebec to Taber, Alberta. On the way we would buy groceries. There were stoves on the train. You could cook, cook your own meals on the train. We could put seats together to make a bed. Through the cracks of the window, the grit from the coal would blow in. Can you imagine my clean mother! We had no inkling of the distance at that time. It was really a kind of pioneer story – on the train across Canada. On and on. And there was no water. And it was very dirty. The coal dust permeated everything.

After two nights and three days we finally got there. But where was there? You should try to imagine. Taber, Alberta at that time! All that space and emptiness. We were picked up by the farmer, whose nickname was Whiskey Bill. We came with clothes all dirty from about 12 days of traveling and were deposited in our new house. It was a fixed-up chicken coop, a shack. Four little rooms, a kitchen not much more than eight by twelve feet, a small bedroom, a living room and another bedroom. Two were leaking with rain. Mother was cheerful. She fixed it all up. She got us all working.

I had to go with my brothers to get water from the farm. There we went, stomping over farm animals and dirt. When we got up to the farm house, they looked at us like we were aliens. They asked us a few questions.

Finally, we all went to sleep.

The next morning we all washed in a little lake. Close to the shack, about 50 or 100 yards away, there was a little lake. That was where we all went to clean up finally. There was just a wooden table, something like we had for beds. I don't know what we did for dishes. Then we had to go hitch-hiking to town to get groceries.

See p. 12

Winter laundry





## Storytelling

## Immigrant to Immigrant ... continued from p.11



Resting in field

The second week we were there we made a bedroom for the boys from a nearby barn. Dad had taken along flower seeds, and he planted seeds all around the house. But the summer was so wet, we didn't have many flowers that summer.

We were hired to do sixty acres of beets. Do you know how big an acre is? When we saw the first field we thought it was sixty but it was only eight. We all put work clothes on. Early in the morning we would go. We would leave the little shack 5 o'clock in the morning. There was only a small path. If you kicked the weeds next to the path all the mosquitoes would rise.

We had chickens and we had a root cellar and we had a toilet outside. And as it rained a lot that summer, we put down boards from the house to the toilet so you wouldn't get all muddy going in and out. Mom baked bread in the wood-fired oven, in the big stove. It was all hard work.

Very, very hard.

And the immensity of the prairie! It was impossible to imagine. But it was a good experience. The family, which had grown up in the city, had to get together now. Yes, it was good, it was very good to be there.

And I'll never forget the first Sunday. On Sunday we all went to church. We hitch-hiked to church. All of us hitch-hiked, and some of us were picked up by other people from the church. That was a great get-together, talking, how are you and where are you from, etcetera. It was wonderful.

Sundays were the high point of the week. You can imagine: all the people who came from The Netherlands and had been there in Canada for just a short while, for them it was a bit of a homecoming. People all together. After church, coffee and stuff. Some would go to this family,

some to that family. Everyone visiting and exchanging children for the day. Sundays were wonderful, going to church, getting to know other people. And I would sing my heart out.

## Part III.

We moved and found new work. But, the economy was not good, the money was not piling up. We were all doing whatever jobs we could. And in those days, we did what we were told without much ado. That was just the way it had to be. The promise that Dad and Mom made that I could go back with a trousseau did not work out. The economy was hard. Only the girls could find work. Someone had to bring in the bacon for the boys to eat.

When I realized I couldn't go back to The Netherlands, I wrote Dries a letter to say I couldn't come back. And, lo and behold, very soon afterwards, on the 29th of February, he came. Around three o'clock, the bell rang. And who was there? Dries. I will forever be thankful to him for coming.

[P.S. Me too! Jo Kuyvenhoven.]

I am thankful for this story, and many others in my life. I have often thought afterwards that it took the dark, heavy chain of illness to make us both believe we had the time and need to tell and listen. For that I feel terrible.

I hope you were struck by the eerie similarity of my mother's experience to those who left Afghanistan, Sierra Leone, Argentina and so on. We need to hear and remember our stories to learn about uncertainty and deprivation. The stories of our church members can ease the cultural barriers between ourselves and other newcomers. We can tell our stories to share hope. For many immigrants, this country became fully home. Not just because they found a nice house at the end, but because over the course of many years, their gathering with Christians made them more able to make a strange place home. God used the place where storytelling happened and stories were shared.

The crowding out of an unhurried story between neighbors makes us like puzzle pieces loose in a taped box. Shared stories join us together in the peculiarity of each person's shape. Those of you who read my mother's story now feel a new depth of acquaintance and affection. Your life and my mother's have touched.

Invite your neighbor in for a storytelling, and ask her how to make a cup of chai.



First car



Sewing and working



## Reflection

## What's in a name?

## Ron De Boer

You've got to admit, my name – Ron – is pretty simple and bland. My wife says I am aptly named.

It's a weird name when you say it aloud a few times. Try it. *Ron. Ron. Ron.* It sounds like *wrong*, which, my wife says, is appropriate, since I am, in fact, wrong most of the time.

When I was a kid, I'd always try to find my name inside other words. *Toronto. Prong.* And my brothers' favorite – *moron*. As in, "Pass the ball, moRON." Of course, my response was always something to the effect of: "You want more Ron, I'll give you more Ron!" as I began unbuttoning my shirt. Yes, life was sometimes slow on the family farm.

My name is also one of those easy-to-rhyme names, so that kids used to sing, "Ron, Ron the leprechaun went to school with nothing on...." In high school, I was known for a while as Raunchy.

My name is not unique. At one time there were three other Rons in my sixth grade class. Things have not changed. Last year in church council there were three of us Rons, all of whom jerked our heads up every time another was addressed. I hate when that happens. Someone will say, "Ron will now report on the search committee's findings..." and a stab of anxiety will shoot through my stomach because, in a moment of irrational panic, I think I'm supposed to report on something. Of course, the real Ron will start talking and anyone who had swung their eyes over to me would then be diverted away again.

I've heard there are name conventions held every year where everyone with the same first name meets. I wonder what it would be like to congregate in an auditorium with 700 other Rons. Are we a certain type of person? I feel awkward enough greeting a Ron namesake – there are two others at the school where I teach – when I meet him in the hall. Imagine saying "Hi Ron" at the registration desk, then "Hello Ron" at the coffee table, and then "How are you, Ron?" at the urinal? Weird.

This year we have a new teacher at our school. His name is James Bond. Everyone cracked up when he was introduced to the staff, of course, but he quickly explained that both his father and grandfather were also James Bonds, so the Agent 007 James Bond in the movies must surely be named after his ancestors.

There are others like him who share famous names. I knew a kid whose name was Michael Jackson, after the eccentric singer. And then there are those poor souls who share a name with criminals who become famous for their crimes. Jeffrey Dahmer was a skinny grade 9 student in my school the year the serial killer Jeffery Dahmer was arrested. He didn't have a fun year.

Apparently, in some parts of the world,



*Papa names the triplets*

those who share a criminal's name will get threatening phone calls. Similarly, those with celebrity namesakes will constantly get calls from bozos banking on the off chance the real celebrity will be listed in a phone book in some small town such as Drayton.

My own brush with a famous name-sake happened a few years back when Ronald DeBoer was a big star on the Dutch national soccer team at the World Cup. That summer, convenience store clerks with foreign accents would be watching a game on a little black and white TV under the counter and, when I handed them my credit card, say "Ron DeBoer! Go to France. Your team needs you tomorrow – hah, hah, hah!" I lost my celebrity status when Ron DeBoer the soccer player missed a penalty shot in a crucial game and the Netherlands were sent home packing.

As a teacher I have come across some interesting names. A couple of years ago I taught a shy little tenth grader named Crystal Ball. Last year a math teacher by the name of Joe King joined our staff. I'm not joking. Since our school is very multi-cultural, the English translations of names are often a bit tricky. I once taught a Vietnamese boy named Hi Ho; he didn't have a clue about the song the seven dwarves sang. Before pronouncing Phuc Yao's name the morning of a new school year, I asked him for clarification on the long and short vowel of his first name. About ten years ago, a pair of twins name Ferken and Merken Ackhol came through my school. Thankfully, only Merken ended up taking my senior English class. And then there was poor Luke from my basic level English class some years back, who proudly announced that he was born while his father was in prison and named after his Dad's cellmate, whose name was Lucky.

Many parents believe that somehow giving their children prominent names – even biblical names such as David or Mary – will somehow affect the outcome of their lives, but many cultures believe in honoring their elders by naming children after them. Angus Baxter in "In Search of Your British and Irish Roots" describes a pattern that was popular in England in the 1700-1875 period: The first son was named after the father's father; the second son was named after the mother's father; the third son was named after the father; the fourth son was named after the father's eldest brother; the first daughter after

the mother's mother; the second daughter after the father's mother; the third daughter after the mother; the fourth daughter after the mother's eldest sister.

You'd need a PhD in nameology to keep track of your own family. And if you think that's confusing, consider the system used in some Scandinavian countries where the given name of the father becomes the surname of the son. If Eric Larson has a son, he will be John Ericson and his son will be Sven Johnson.

Can you imagine *that* church directory?

Then there are those poor kids who, no matter what the name they were given by their loving parents, get a nickname sometime in school and are forever known by that name. I went to school with a Stinky, a Klingon, a Bones, and a Farmer. Of course these names don't always last forever.

You lose touch with your schoolmates then run into them years later in a church while you're out of town camping, and you say, "Hey, Stink, long time no see." Stink looks at you as if you've just smacked him with a newspaper. A bit embarrassing.

Or what about the delicate situation in which you meet someone for whom everyone else has a nickname, but you feel you haven't known the person long enough to call him by his nickname. I know a guy named Bill Slumskie who everyone calls "the Slummer." If you called him "Bill" in the early weeks of knowing him, he looked at you with such distance you knew you'd just been relegated to the back forty of his circle of acquaintances. Sometimes he didn't even acknowledge you until you added "Slummer" to your sentence.

Slummer was also the type of guy who never called you by your own name, but instead figured out some derivative nickname for you. I have never been Ron to the Slummer, but instead Raanny. He has never called our colleague, Barry Schulist, Barry. Barry is simply "Shoe." Dave Treliving is "Tree." Diane Kewley is "Cue."

The word "name" itself is an interesting one. We use it in many different forms. People try to make a "name" for themselves in sports or politics by taking a big risk or doing something extraordinary. You may be the type of person who "name-drops" famous people as a way to make yourself appear more important. We say "That's the name of the game," when emphasizing something's purpose. You may have found yourself saying that someone holds a position in "name only," referring to the fact that someone has a title which he or she doesn't really warrant. You name it, and I've probably used the word with some nameless colleague.

It strikes me that in many of the above instances the word *name* is used in human terms. It's about *our* name and its importance. We want our names in lights; we want to make a name for ourselves. We chisel

our names prominently on tombstones and clip newspaper articles in which we are named publicly. We name streets after accomplished athletes; farmers paint their names on their barns; we can get personalized license plates with our names.

And now you can forever preserve your name in the stars – literally. For \$54, the International Star Registry will allow you to name a star, and then they will send you a gift package which includes a beautiful 12" x 16" parchment certificate with the name of your choice, dedication date, and telescopic coordinates of the star. You'll also receive an informative booklet with charts of the constellations plus a larger, more detailed chart with the star you name encircled in red. The Greeks placed their heroes in the stars, now you can forever be immortalized in the constellations, as well. Can you imagine – the Big Dipper, Taurus, and... Ron?

Our names are, in fact, important – to God. He knows each of our names. I was brought up with the notion that everything in life came down to whether or not my name was written in the Big Book.

John's harsh words in his vision in Revelation underlines the importance of our name to God: "if anyone's name was not found written in the Book of Life, he was thrown into the lake of fire." Imagine that scene. You arrive at the pearly gates and God runs his finger down the "D" page and then knits his brow and runs his finger up the page again until finally he smiles and lets you in. Whew! But of course you knew your name was there all along, right? Luke says, "rejoice that your names are written in heaven" (10:20).

The Bible makes some 90 plus references to the word "name." Of course, the most important name is the name of God himself. The Psalmist writes, "Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God" (20:7). I love the song we sing from the overhead that goes, "The name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous run into it and they are saved...." What a great image.

Someone once said that God must be really important if so many people, by default, take his name in vain when they are hurt or angry. They don't smash their thumbs with a hammer and shout, "Wayne Gretzky!" or nearly get hit by a reckless driver and shout "George Bush!" No, they take the Lord's name in vain. Why? Because even though they are cursing his glorious name, they understand the deep importance of that name. Their taking his name in vain is admission to the greatness of God.

In the end, our names really don't matter at all. Tombstones fade away; stadium signs get lowered; people forget the significance of street names. But God's name has been in lights for generations: "O Lord, Our God, how majestic is your name in all the earth!" (Psalm 8:1).



## Prayer

# The Lord's Prayer – *Our Father in Heaven* Both near and far

J.H. Sillevis-Smit

Translated by Jack van Meggelen

## Profit or loss

A healthy spiritual life always contains a balanced contradiction: nearness and distance. Because God is near and distant. God is nearer than anyone or anything. We live in and through him: we have our total existence from him. God is so near that I may call him Father, and that I may consider myself his child. At the same time he is also the exalted One who lives on high. He cares for the sparrows and the lilies in the field. He knows our needs before we even ask him. And yet he is the glorious, majestic God whom 'no one can see and live' according to the Scriptures.

In the words of Jesus which follow the opening words of the Lord's Prayer we see this duality of nearness and distance clearly expressed. The phrase "in heaven" contains the richness we have in God, and the distance from God. Distance denotes separation, loss and poverty. The words "in heaven" seem to contain the possible suggestion that the nearness and closeness expressed with the words "our Father" is illusory. As if the gains we made by dwelling on the words "our Father" are lost when we focus on the next phrase.

But reality is different. The phrase "in heaven" enriches the words "our Father" significantly and gives them a deeper meaning.

## Let God be God

The Heidelberg Catechism, when dealing with the phrase "in heaven" states that "these words teach us not to think of God's heavenly majesty as something earthly." This interpretation hits the mark. Our spiritual life is in constant danger of being sidetracked from our service to God. Formality, habit, fanaticism and boredom can all divert us from faithful service. I believe the greatest obstacle to leading a faithful life is that we make God after our own image and will, and that we serve him the way we choose.

We think we are too sophisticated to harbor a primitive urge to serve gods of silver or gold, wood or stone. But we humans have not outgrown this urge to fashion our own gods, nor will we, in our own strength, succeed in overcoming the temptation to serve such gods. The desire to make gods in our own image is rooted in the marrow of

our bones. It flows like our lifeblood which feeds every cell in our body.

We must learn and be reminded that, grammatically, God is always subject. We must not make God the object of our thinking or our theologizing, nor can we study God as if he were a flower or intellectual concept. God is always God. He is always subject, the one who directs and orders our world and us, the object of his care and love.

All attempts to create a concept of God apart from his revealed Word in the Scripture amounts to nothing more than an attempt to make God after our own image. And the world is full of arrogant people who make such attempts. When we say (and we say it all too often): "God can't possibly do that," "this is not fair," or "God can't mean it that way," we are in fact making a god after our own image. We expect God to be as we see him and as we want him to live up to our expectations as a sort of super hero.

Nearly all our images of God are a reflection of our own humanity elevated to a supernatural and eternal level. That is the original sin and it destroys all true spirituality. When we want to think or speak about God, it is wise to begin by saying to ourselves that we can understand nothing about God. He must say it, and we must listen. He must speak and we must accept. We would do well to remember the first of the ten commandments, "You shall have no other gods before me," or another Bible verse which says, "Hear, O Israel: the Lord your God is One." There is no God besides him. He is the absolute, the Alpha and Omega, the first and last. God is unique. That is the word proclamation of the first commandment.

And the second commandment follows right on its heels: let this God be who he is. Try not to form him with your hands or with your mind. The first law says: I am God. The second: you must let me be God.

When we pray "Our Father" and the following words "in heaven," then we are drawn immediately to consider his dwelling in heaven. In our response we must not bring God down to earth but leave God where he resides,



Michelangelo's God

We may not dethrone him nor force him to fit into the miserable and corrupted image that plays around in our mind. We may not demand a God whose righteousness and love fit only within the boundaries of our limited and corrupted human experience. We will have to accept God as he is.

When you pray, "Our Father in heaven," don't fool yourself into thinking that you are free from the temptation of bringing God down to earth. Such thinking is hazardous. We can't help but try to take God out of heaven and reduce or limit him to something that suits us better. We habitually try to make him fit our lifestyles and subject him to our desires. That is what "heathens" do in their fashion; and liberal thinkers for their own reasons. But that's what faithful, believing people also do whenever they let their guard down.

And it is worse when faithful believers do this, because they do it under the guise of being unwaveringly faithful and true to the Word-revelation. Unchurched people often see right through this charade, and quickly see how God

is carefully made to fit the narrow-minded milieu of like-minded idealists. It is shameful when seemingly faithful people destroy the credibility of the gospel by reducing God to a graven image of their own invention or by exchanging his glory for a poorly fabricated copy.

## Faithful and strong

The words "in heaven" direct us to become still and respectful towards God. But there is a second part to the meaning. This phrase is meant to impress us with the majesty and greatness of God. It focuses the thoughts of a prayerful person to remember that the God whom we address as "our Father" is the same God who lives in the highest heaven, whose might is as great as his love and whose faithfulness is measured by his power. The words "in heaven" stimulate us into seeing God in all his grandeur.

We can make many errors and commit many sins, but one of the most horrendous errors is to reduce God to fit our small minds, and to minimize the extent of his

love, his caring and his power to our own trivial proportions. Over against that common mistake, I would like to say most emphatically: Please, open and expand your mind so that you can accept God's true greatness, and see the magnitude of his love and care, his power and faithfulness. At the same time, become aware of the huge host of powerful servants he has at his disposal. Enlarge your mind so that you come to know your all-powerful heavenly Father and his never-ending forgiving love. He will accomplish all that his love desires to achieve.

Lord teach us to pray: "Our Father in heaven." That is: "Cure us from our habit of forming you after our own image. Cure us from bringing you down from the heaven of your glory to the narrowness of our conceited commonality. Lead us to envision your stature, to expect all things from you, to rest ourselves in you, to live only for you and to place our trust in you alone. Lord teach us to pray, ... in heaven!"



## Review /Sports

## The rockin' Rev: a TV sitcom with southern and Canadian soul

Emalyn Franco-Romano

Who says that religion has to be solemn? TV shows like *7th Heaven* and movies like *The Black Robe* are often too somber for some audiences, especially younger viewers. Mississauga native, John Carmen, is on a mission to change that stigma. He hopes to tap into the lighter side of religion through his new TV movie and sitcom dubbed *The Rev*.

Carmen, executive producer and lead actor of *The Rev*, plays the character of Reverend Johnny Starr, a wannabe rock star turned minister.

"You always see a Christian film or a show that is too dramatic and it's never a fun thing, and I thought why not do a show about a preacher who lifts up God but in a way that is hip, cool but a little on the quirky side?"

The film *The Rev* will make its first debut on CTS July 18 at 9 p.m. The production will also air the following week on July 24 and 25 on the Miracle Channel and NOW TV. For show times call (905) 271-1111.

Born and raised in Mississauga, Carmen worked in public relations and human resources before pursuing his dream of becoming a star in his own TV sit-com. With no background in acting, Carmen took lessons so that he could play the part of Johnny Starr.

"I had never even done a commercial," said Carmen. "But I had over 40 dreams of playing the part of a preacher and the part of Johnny Starr double 'n' double r' came to me," said Carmen, mimicking a line his character is known for with a southern drawl.

The storyline is centred around the character of Johnny Starr

(Carmen), who was adopted by an African-American pastor named Winston Starr and his wife Matty. Later in life, Johnny winds up following the footsteps of his deceased father by spreading the gospel, but with a rock'n'roll flavor, donning Elvis-style rhinestone beaded clothes, a red '57 convertible Cadillac and his beloved electric guitar.

"It's no secret that Johnny Starr's character is double-minded," said Carmen. "He has two callings in life, his passion for ministering and his desire to be a rock star, I think this is where the comedic element comes in."

Not to mention that Johnny's character is that of a white man raised by a black family.

With Carmen's limited experience in the entertainment industry, he enlisted the help of Emmy award winning producer, Deborah Gabler to create a half-hour pilot episode. The production costs for the film and TV pilot totaled well over \$1 million. Although the fictional settings for the two productions take place in Las Vegas and Upstate New York, the actual footage was shot in Mississauga, Oakville and Vancouver. Carmen was so passionate about the concept that he invested much of his own funds to finance the project.

"I thought it was a great concept," said Gabler. "There hasn't been a sitcom filmed in Vancouver or in Toronto in over 15 years."

Although the pilot has not been picked up by a network yet, Gabler and Carmen have every confidence that it soon will be.

"I want *The Rev* to reach everyone. Not just the Christian audience, but everyone," said Carmen.



John Carmen, executive producer and lead actor of *The Rev*, plays the character of Reverend Johnny Starr.

## Lying low in Lithuania

At the end of June, Monica and I packed our bags and headed East to do some summer English teaching. East to Lithuania – a magnificent land of rolling hills, a dark but fascinating history, cheap beer, and basketball.

Yes, basketball. While Canadians may have hockey in their blood, Lithuanians live life to the rhythm of a bouncing ball. Little kids play basketball on outdoor courts all over the country and dream of being the next Arvydas Sabonis or Sarunas Marciulionis.

As it happens, the Lithuanian men's Olympic basketball team is practicing in the gym of the college we are teaching at. This is the same team that came within one point of beating the Americans at the Olympics a few years back. This is the most loved sports team in all of Lithuania. So when I was sitting in the college cafeteria and saw their bus pull up and drop the team off for their first day of practice, I figured that the groupies and zealots would be out in full force. They weren't.

The bus pulled up in front of the cafeteria. I pointed out the window and said (fairly loudly). "There they are!" I got nothing but confused stares. "What's the big deal?" seemed to be the common message directed at me. A couple of the 50-or-so students sitting there looked out at the team for an extended time, but the rest didn't know what all the fuss was about.

And then I realized that my North American penchant for hype and celebrity didn't wash in this corner of the world. It made me think of the rock band U2, who choose to live in their native Ireland because they can walk through the streets of Dublin without being accosted by the various forms of wingnut and psycho-freak that stalk celebrities in North America. I like that.

So many people have annoying stories about some famous person who they saw once across a crowded room or about getting an autograph from

## After the Buzzer

Tim Antonides



some significant figure. If you really think about it, who cares? I guess it's logical (in our culture) that people might try to gain some extra ounce of significance by making contact with a celebrity, but it's all really so pointless.

This dynamic is certainly not limited to celebrity-spotting, however. Attempts at self-importance come in all forms. There are breeds of travelers I've encountered who insist on name-dropping exotic places: "Ah, Dahling, you really must see Paris in the spring," or: "I spend a night in London on all my trips to Europe." Then you have pseudo-intellectuals who insist on interlineating abstruse and recondite words into their vocabulary in a desperate attempt to impress. As well, there's the crowd who can't help but mention their "Beemer" or the "summer house."

Most of us want so badly to be important and relevant. If that doesn't work, it seems the second best thing is to try to make associations with those who are. In the end, though, isn't it all just a bunch of nonsense? The problem is that human greatness is tangible; spiritual greatness can be ethereal. Qualities like humility and patience and gentleness don't play well on the screen of our culture, and they're certainly not very sexy.

I'm not naïve enough to suggest that this will ever change (i.e., "Look, it's that Christian school teacher, Tim Antonides.

Let's get his autograph"), but I do wonder if it wouldn't be a half-bad idea to care a little less about our own image and a little more about image-bearing.

Tim Antonides is back to teaching in Surrey, B.C. after spending a year in grad school.



## Fight Alzheimer's – fast (run and don't eat)

Researchers have been able to reverse memory loss in animals. That may also be good news for human beings, especially in the fight



Turn and run

against Alzheimer's. The onset of memory lost, the research suggests, can be postponed by exercise and diet, plus the use of antioxidant vitamins.

Overeating not only contributes to heart disease and diabetes but also to the formation of plaque in the brain.

"At the very least, maintaining a lifestyle that reduces heart disease might also lower your risk of getting demented," said Benjamin Wolozin, professor of pharmacology at Loyola University Medical

Center in Maywood, Ill.

Researchers from the U.S. National Institute on Aging reported that people

with Alzheimer's have increased levels of fats in the nerve-cell linings of the brain, especially in those parts that govern memory and attention. By blocking two of these fats – cholesterol and ceramide – with drugs, the researchers found brain cells stayed fit longer.

Research with 200 sets of twins indicate that lifestyle choices play a significant role in the onset of dementia. Brenda Plassman, director of the dementia program at Duke University

Medical Center in Durham, N.C., said the new findings provide real hope that Alzheimer's can be delayed, and perhaps prevented. Delaying the onset of Alzheimer's by just five years could reduce the number of cases by half during the next 50 years.

Another good reason to stay fit and worry about those extra pounds accumulating around the waist as we grow older. Researchers also found that skipping meals for long intervals – even if the overall calories eaten each day are not reduced – seemed to have a beneficial effect on brain cells. From now on, I'll try fasting before I write my editorials.

[Based on info from *The National Post*.]



## Humor

# What Western civilization owes to the Dutch

Simon van Onderdyk

I used to be suspicious of preachers who kept harping on the theme of change, but recent revelations have changed my mind. The revelations are related to the game of golf. I understand that a great many pastors get revelations on the golf course, so I recommend the game to everyone.

When you really connect with that ball and it rises high into the blue firmament to disappear forever as if into another realm, well, it makes you believe that there really is such a thing as a transcendent world that is very near but invisible. My shots off the tee regularly pass into that invisible world—I'm convinced of it. Along with my favorite socks.

But that's another matter. Back to the theme of change. To be Reformed means to be always reforming, pastors like to say. It's the central message of the Gospel: you've got to change. Here they usually teach us a little Greek too: "met-anoy-yah" means change your mind, and that's the word for conversion.

But I went to public school, where I learned to be suspicious of priests and pastors. I suspected that they were just trying to bully me into being so open to change that I'd go along with anything they said. Lacking any credible arguments to convince me, as a last resort they were just using biblical Greek to intimidate me and turn me into putty in their eager little hands.

All that hammering on change never made much sense to me, though. Didn't we Reformed folk get all our beliefs from the Bible in the first place? Why on earth would the Bible be telling us to change our minds about truths taught by the Bible? It's like using the Bible to undermine itself. There, pastor, stick that in your pipe and smoke it! May it give you revelations better than those on the golf course.

Recently, however, new light has been shed on the matter. I've begun to understand. And it came by way of golf. I'd always been led to believe that golf was invented by Scotsmen.

Way back there at the sacred beginning of things, before there were sports and Wheaties and Saturday Night Hockey, there were shepherds. No, not the ones in Bethlehem—the ones way off in Scotland, where no angels ever ventured. Scottish shepherds used to get very bored looking after their sheep. I guess it was because Scottish sheep were very well behaved. And the Scots had very clever dogs called Lassie to look after the sheep. To relieve the boredom, the shepherd would take his shepherd's crook by the wrong end and knock stones into gopher holes.

Originally the hills and meadows in Scotland were strewn with small stones and riddled with gophers, so the pastime caught on. At the end of a long day under the hot sun, the shepherds would meet in the local



pub and brag about how many stones they had whacked into gopher holes that day and how few strokes it took. Pretty soon everyone in a kilt was out in the pasture giving it a try.

Incidentally, this is also the reason Scotsmen got a reputation for being cheap. In most games the person with the highest score wins. But here was a game where the least was first. It appealed to the Scots' Calvinist spirit of self-denial. (This was before Calvinism became Americanized.) Golf drilled into the Scottish psyche the notion that less is more. As a result, they've never been great tippers. But they have become great golfers.

This is canonical history. Everybody "knows" that golf originated with the Scots and is part of their national character.

It turns out, however, that it isn't true. I just found that out this past week. So I've had to change my mind on one of my foundational beliefs. It nearly knocked my socks off (the ones that haven't yet disappeared). My view of origins has had to undergo a radical change, a paradigm shift, a conversion. The theologians of change are right after all: it does shake you up and make you feel vulnerable—like a shepherd on a hill in the middle of a thunderstorm. I am now no longer a triumphalistic Calvinist but a chastened one.

Last week I learned that the game of golf originated not in Scotland but in Holland. In Holland!

In a land without hills, stones or sheep—at least, not very many. The Dutch always imported their wool from Manchester, England, after it was dyed black or dark blue. For some reason the Dutch like blue. When I was a kid, all the tiles, plates, dishes and cups were blue. My guess is that it's to remind themselves of the color of the sky, which they don't get to see very often. It's always overcast.

Anyway, undoubtedly historians are frantically rewriting the history books this very

minute. Or maybe not. Historians don't like crediting the Dutch with any great discoveries. Like so many things, it's the fault of the Americans. Americans know approximately where Scotland is on the map, but they have a hard time finding Holland or The Netherlands or "Dutchland," as some Americans refer to it. It's so blasted small. And all those different names are confusing to them.

Chances are that the historians will cave in to American imperialism and refuse to credit the Dutch with the invention of golf. I suspect that down deep they're afraid to even acknowledge the presence of the Dutch because the Yanks know they stole the continent from them. It's a slippery slope: acknowledge that they invented golf and before long you'll have to acknowledge their claim to New York and everything attached to it.

I confess that I was extremely skeptical when I first heard the story. I tried to imagine playing golf in wooden shoes and dark blue baggy pants while eating herring. It just didn't add up. So to authenticate the story, I went online. To my utter shock and horror, I discovered that not only did the Dutch invent golf, they invented hockey too! Canada's sole claim to global stature—invented by the Dutch!

See, once you open yourself to change, the process is endless. One domino after another goes tumbling down the slippery slope into the maelstrom of relativism. The world was disintegrating around me and spinning round and round as if I was on a carnival ride. Maniacal laughter rang in my ears, and I was about to clamp my hands over them when I noticed the laughter was coming from my own throat.

For a moment I thought I was having one of those mid-life identity crisis attacks. But then I realized I'd had one of those ten years ago. In fact, my mid-life crisis was brought on by the fact that I never had one, so I went to see a shrink. The real crisis came when I had to pay the bill. Was I going to end up with another one of those astronomical bills that brought on those post-traumatic stress episodes? (Luckily those were covered by OHIP, along with my visits to the massage parlor.)

Upon further reflection, of course, it all begins to look quite credible. Why hadn't we seen it before? Golf and hockey have similar origins. It's nothing more than seeing a pattern, and once you see it, the common origin is obvious. The bent stick, the hole or goal, the hard missile, the launch position—they quite obviously derive from the same social context, the same body language, the same basic ground motives.

This will require further analysis and theory, but the broad outlines are already beginning to take shape. Who puts greater onus on filling holes (negative space) than the Dutch? They have always felt as if they

were about to sink down below the dark waters (like Peter walking on the waves). They alone among all the peoples of the Western world know bodily-experientially what it means to have no solid earth beneath your feet and to be surrounded and threatened by the oceans, by the waters of chaos and indeterminacy. It is like living forever in the first verse of Genesis, with creation threatening to dissolve back into formlessness.

The Dutch, more than anyone else, have been acutely aware of the negative space within man, too, so picking up a stick to symbolically fill the empty spaces, the void, with little stones, becomes an expression of his sense of the universe. It also signifies the relative futility of his efforts, for who can hope to fill the great depression that is Holland by knocking little stones into a hole? The negative scoring only underlines this low assessment of human effort. Yet, that is the human condition as seen by those raised below sea level. On herring and cheese.

This revelation has forever altered the way I see golf and hockey. These sports now have deep theological resonance with me. (Hockey is merely winter practice for golf with the holes turned perpendicular, making holes in frozen earth is difficult here.) Why did these games transfer so readily to optimistic Pelagian nations like the US and Canada? I can only hazard a theory, but it's a good one, and I challenge anyone to come up with a better one.

While the Dutch played golf as an expression of their primal fears, North Americans play the game as a parody, a mockery of those fears. Every time they get out there on that well-manicured piece of land, it is as if they are striding out into a new world in which all the threats, the dark voids and looming chasms, have been reduced to harmless little pockmarks in a bright green lawn. A few effortless whacks (and those who are most adept at making it look effortless are the most celebrated) and the negative spaces of the world are made level. It's the American game par excellence, in which shallowness overcomes depth.

Hockey recovered something of the primal struggle, especially against the elements—winter, frost, ice. These are to Canadians what the oceans are to the Dutch. And all that body-checking and blood add an element of the primitive struggle for survival that even Dutch Calvinists have forgotten.

Yes, I am now wholly in favor of openness to change. It is therapeutic. Good for the soul. I used to have nightmares that my basement was filling up with water and the floodwaters were threatening to wash my house from its foundations. After a couple of games of golf, the nightmares stopped, and I have become a much happier person.

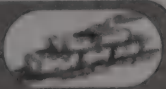
*Continued on p. 17...*



## Reflection

## BuildingTrust

Vicky Van Andel Ed.



## When I am old....

Growing old is fact of life. It is not necessarily a fact of life we like, but a reality is that each day of our lives we get one day older. In younger years this reality easily slips us by. We tend not to think about it much. We might even look forward to getting older and wiser in our desire to learn more about life.

Towards mid-life, however, we find ourselves starting to think differently. We become aware that we are on our way to becoming older. We might not yet be old but we are getting there. Beyond mid-life it is even more a reality. Our bodies start to give us messages. Some things are harder to do than they were before. We don't have the same stamina, flexibility and drive.

I am at the stage in life at which I am considered to be an older person, especially by the younger generation. I am really not that old, but I am beyond mid-life. My physical body testifies of it. I am less strong than I used to be and I need to pace myself more.

I also find my thoughts drifting towards getting older more often. I wonder what being old is really like. Just this past weekend I hiked in the mountains and caught myself looking around me with new eyes, thinking about the future, and how long I would still be able to do this. I made a mental note of the easy paths we came across, to keep in mind for the time when I will not be able to walk as well. I observed older people quietly strolling along the lake and asked myself how life was for them. I consciously saw the difference between the older people meandering along and the younger

people energetically running around with colorful backpacks, ready to take on the wild back country.

It made me feel nostalgic a bit, even though I am really not that old. You could even say that being almost sixty is actually quite young when compared to people who are eighty or ninety. It's all relative really. It's not how old you are but how young you feel.

I started being curious about old age a long time ago. Wondering why some old people were happy and grateful and others crabby and unhappy, I once wrote an essay entitled "Aging Gracefully." In my readings for this paper I learned that people grow old as they live.

People who learn from life's experiences, both the good and the bad, and integrate them into their lives by finding meaning in them, find meaning in old age. They are happy. On the other hand, people who are not able to do that, who do not learn to grow as persons through their experiences, have a hard time growing old. They tend to be unhappy.

At an early age already I saw that happiness or unhappiness was not a function of one's life events. I saw people who had experienced many difficulties lead grateful lives, and others who seemed to have it pretty good, be quite unhappy. Of course these are generalizations, and life, and happiness and unhappiness, is more complex than that.

Getting old though, is no small task. It has dimensions associated with it that are challenging. There are inevitable losses. We lose a lot when we get old: our loved ones, our health, our garden, our home and often much more. As well, we know these losses are not temporary; they are permanent; we will never get these things back.

But does that mean being old is necessarily a negative state? In spite of the above reasons, I don't really think so. Being old, whether or not we like it, is a real and active part of living, a natural outflow of life. Becoming old is part of the circle of life. Older people are links in the chain of the generations. They connect one generation to the next. In nature around us we can see quite easily the connection between the old and the new. There is a constant cycle of growth.

Just this weekend while hiking



in the mountains, I noticed many bright new flowers and plants growing tall and strong right next to fading and dying ones. I could distinguish the life spans of different plants in the wide variety of vegetation growing on the hillside. Each plant had its own period of growth and development but still appeared to be connected to the plants around it. Small new trees grew out of stumps of old dying trees. All these stages of growth, at different times, are needed to allow nature to be complete and to come full circle.

In the same way, people, the old and the young together, complete the cycle of life. Old people are as important in that circle as the young.

Old people complete the lives of younger people. Our society cannot do without older people. To be an old woman is to fulfill the role of mother, grandmother or great-grandmother to children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. It means to be an aunt or great-aunt to the younger generation. The younger generation would miss out without older people to learn from. While it is

true that eventually we all die, we all strive to fulfill our roles in life for as long as possible. We don't want that only for ourselves but also for the people around us we love.

I often find myself looking for role models in life. I look for people I can admire and learn from. At this stage in my life I find myself looking for role models in the older generation. I am finding good examples.

In my daily work I associate with many old people. I see qualities in them I truly admire. These people are generous and kind, and considerate and respectful. They have an unwavering faith in God and a sincere dedication to good causes. They give to others more easily than to themselves, claiming: "I don't need much." They are grateful and appreciative. They often deal with ailments of old age such as arthritis with "Oh, I have some aches and pains, but no use complaining. It doesn't help anyway."

These people know how to love. They love each other, their culture and tradition, their families, grandchildren and great-grand-

children. They value simple things. They have found meaning in their lives. Not that life has been easy for them, because it hasn't. And old age isn't easy either. It often requires all the courage and strength they can muster. But they have what it takes, and I can see it. They have discovered the secret my research taught me - that to be old gracefully is to have lived gracefully. They have done just that. I thank them for being a link in the circle of my life.

In the book *Necessary Losses*, author Judith Viorst suggests that each stage in life has its own losses, and old age is merely one more stage in which we experience loss. Old age is not an exception. When we get older, she says, we have to decide whether we want to be "active or disengaged." In order to be active we need to learn the capacity to "transcend our ego." It helps us to let go of our feelings of loss.

She offers three ways of doing that: by learning to feel pleasure in the pleasures of other people, by being interested in events not directly related to our own self-interest, and by actively investing in tomorrow's world even though we may not be around to see it. She concludes that we ourselves are responsible for our own old age and that it is up to us to make the most of it.

I accept that wisdom and will strive to attain it. Until I am truly old, however, I'll echo the words of Jenny Joseph:

When I am an old woman  
I shall wear purple  
With a red hat which doesn't go,  
and doesn't suit me...  
I shall sit down on the pavement  
when I'm tired  
and gobble up samples in shops  
and press alarm bells...  
I shall go out in my slippers  
in the rain  
and pick flowers in other  
people's gardens  
And learn to spit.

That spirit should keep life interesting as I move forward in faith into old age.

Vicky Van Andel is the editor of this column. Anyone who would like to contribute to this column is invited to contact her via fax at 1-780-473-0970, or e-mail at: vickyv@telus.net

...continued from p.16

A lawn now reminds me of a golf course and not of the struggle for survival. And with Don Cherry I cheer at every hard hit in a hockey game, for it is an affirmation of our ability to endure the hard blows from the North.

Thank you, Dutch forebears, for your great gift to Western culture. It is surpassed only by the great gift of Kuyperian Calvinism and tulips. And tulips don't last very long. And since cigars have been declared taboo, Kuyperian Calvinism hasn't been faring too well either. It always did better with a little puffing and a little smoke.



## Opinion



## Yes ... but

Bert Hielema

## Intelligence?

Don't let Saddam Hussein read those two reports – one by the US Senate and the other by Lord Butler of Great Britain, both dealing with incorrect Iraqi intelligence. If Saddam were to know the details of how he fooled the entire world of cloaks and daggers into believing that he was a danger to global civilization, he would not merely chuckle in his shackles, but run the risk of dying of laughter. And that would be too bad.

Then the world would never hear from him how he was allied with the USA during the war with Iran, and had a friendly visit from Donald Rumsfeld, after he had gassed thousands of Kurds. His so-called WMD – Weapons of Mass Destruction – were nothing else than his very own “Weirdly Managed Deception” by which he tricked the so-called intelligence circles.

In Great Britain Tony Blair took full responsibility for the failures of the British Secret Services. As the boss of the U.S. military, including its information-gathering arms, Bush did not. Intelligence presupposes independent thinking, presupposes letting one's own imagination run wild, acting as the Devil's Advocate, thinking outside the box to use a well-worn expression. The Senators blamed “Group-think” in the failure to reach the proper conclusions about Iraq's WMD.

“Group-think” is just another word for conventional wisdom, meaning the generally held conviction by “experts” on a certain subject. There is an old Jewish saying that “When all think alike, none think,” which is a typical institutional disease. So, when all Spooks spout the same line, beware.

Group-think, conventional wisdom, creeps in everywhere. It tells us that the world's oil will never run out. The more energy we use, the more we'll have, because The Almighty (Market) will generate more production or discover substitutes in time. Perhaps in the back of our minds, we theoretically allow for “the End of Oil,” but, since this will happen only in the far

far future, nobody pays any attention to this, until...

Or take economic growth. The one statistic most eagerly awaited by ‘economists’ is the rate of economic growth. Group-think has it that it can grow from here to eternity. Or take religion. There group-think preaches that we go to heaven, even though the word “Adam” comes from the Hebrew word, ‘Adamah’ meaning ‘of the earth.’ When all think alike, none is thinking, typical of any belief system.

Only ‘understanding’ and ‘love’ and ‘insight,’ all intangibles, can grow indefinitely, all parts of that illusive concept called ‘wisdom.’ Everything that depends on ‘finite’ resources runs the course of ascent, peak, descent.

Intelligence with a capital “I”, referring to information gathering so that the state is well protected, involves moving into the enemy's mind and probing the possibility that what we think as ‘normal’ may not be seen as such by Saddam Hussein, who, indeed, very weirdly managed deception, not unlike the current occupant of the White House, if the verdict of a professor of psychology is true.

In a new book *Bush on the Couch* George Washington University professor of Psychology, Justin Frank, uses the president's public pronouncements and behavior, along with biographical data, to craft a comprehensive psychological profile of Bush Junior. It goes a long way in explaining how exactly the USA got itself into the current mess: a wrongheaded war, the loss of allies and international goodwill, a half-trillion-dollar deficit.

Poking around in the presidential psyche, Dr. Frank uncovers a man suffering from megalomania, paranoia, a false sense of omnipotence, an inability to manage his emotions, a lifelong need to defy authority, an unresolved love-hate relationship with his father, and the repercussions of a history of untreated alcohol abuse.

Whether this is a true picture, time will tell, because eventually time wounds all heels.

Back to Intelligence. Wisdom – or shall I say common sense intelligence – would indicate that Iraq was far from the most dangerous country when it came to WMD. If there was fear of WMD getting into al Qaeda's hands, Iraq would not be the top candidate. That would have been Pakistan by a mile, exceeded by an even more dangerous North Korea. Yet the Bush administration chose to invade Iraq because it provided a bridgehead into the richest oilfields in the world and pleased Israel.

The way I, in a weak moment, read the real reason why no heads rolled when the CIA failed to detect al Qaeda's plans for September 11 is that the White House wanted to blackmail the leadership of the CIA to manufacture a case to attack Iraq. Tit for tat. Your soul for your job.

Too cynical? No, I am not as cynical as Michael Moore. I think he missed the point in his documentary. Don't go and see Fahrenheit 9/11 unless you too want to suffer. That haunting face is still with me and kept me from sleeping most of the night. Highly unusual for me.

At 4 o'clock I finally got out of bed and did some reading. After that I slumbered a bit, but not really restfully. Wide awake I wondered what Bush was thinking. His face, his eyes, his indecisive look, his mesmerized expression persecuted me all night. Bush's daylight nightmare started when, while visiting a classroom, an aid sneaked and whispered in the Presidential ear that a second plane had struck the World Trade Center, that the country where he was the top gun, was at war. With the clock ticking on the screen, for what seemed like an eternity, a long seven minutes, he kept on reading *My Pet Goat* to the children, while, I am sure, his mind was elsewhere. He didn't know what to do.

That moment has been used to great effect in this film. It was supposed to be a photo-opportunity for his “Don't Leave A Child Behind” initiative, to be used in his reelection. I imagine it will still be an election tool, but not as intended, perhaps with the slogan “Leave Bush Behind.” It won't get John Kerry in the White House on its own, but it certainly exposes the current occupant in a critical moment as helpless without his advisers nearby to tell him what to do. Where was Cheney at this crucial moment?

My advice: Don't see the film. It will make you lose confidence in the political system. I know, I haven't got a lot left on that score and my column is not going to help you much in that regard. Still the man's face – his shifting eyes, his twitching mouth – is almost nightmarish. Unless you are a more hardened person than I, don't go.

What went on there in his brain? What was he thinking? Perhaps next year, unemployed and getting a \$10 million advance for his memoirs, he may reveal his innermost thoughts during that fateful period.

But don't bet on it.

A good portion of Fahrenheit 9/11 deals with his relations to the Saudis. That, I think, gives the wrong impression. Papa Bush, who is featured prominently, most certainly had and still has deep ties there. In 1991 during the first Gulf War he listened to the House of Saud and stopped at the Iraqi border.

The Saudis were then and still are now vehemently opposed to the Iraqi adventure. Bush Jr. did it anyway. Michael Moore makes a major mistake there.

He also forgets to mention that Ariel Sharon, the Israeli P.M. has Bush in his pocket. Israel is a vote getter, not only because of the Zionist Jews, but especially because of the President's real allies, his most strident backers, the Christian Zionists and Bible-thumping fundamentalists like Jerry Falwell, who consider Israel Jesus' next stop and see Islam in general and Saudi Arabia in particular as satanic.

The film also portrays Bush in his favorite pastime: raising money among the moneyed. With his trademark smirk, sporting a beautiful tuxedo, he proudly proclaims among a most affluent crowd at a \$1,000 per head dinner: “I am here among the have's and the have-more's: the elite, my base.” Contrast this with Michael Moore who is the folksy type – something Bush also tries to portray. The reality, revealed by Mr. Moore, is that Mr. Bush has always lived in a bubble of privilege. Where Michael Moore has a genuine concern for the working-class Americans, he strips away Bush's common-man mask, and uses his film to show that Bush's policies are geared to the rich at the expense of especially the poor blacks.

He pictures how the unemployed poor serve in the military, and follows Marine recruiters as they trawl the malls of depressed communities, where joining the forces is the only way for young men and women to escape poverty. He then contrasts this with corporate executives, who, at a lavish conference on Iraq, nibble on exotic tit-bits and exult over future profit opportunities, which, to their horror have not come.

So, the movie isn't perfect. The real point, however, comes through – how Bush exploited a national tragedy for political gain, while ordinary Americans pay the price. I agree: the movie is a bit of propaganda. But it's well done and correct in many ways. So risk a sleepless night.

Bert Hielema lives in Tweed, Ontario. His website has been updated, now including all past columns as well as other writings: [www.geocities.com/hielema](http://www.geocities.com/hielema)





## Family / Business Directory

# Basement flood leads to Noah's Ark syndrome (Or: A splashy end to a family vacation)

Lisa M. Petsche

This time of year reminds me of an unexpected end to one of my family's summer vacations. I was about 15 years old at the time.

Arriving home after a week in cottage country, we expected our house to feel hot and stuffy when we entered it. After all, it had been closed up tight for seven days. The air turned out to be surprisingly heavy, though – downright steamy, in fact. We decided it must have been extremely humid in the city while we were away.

Without further thought, we proceeded to unload the car. Eventually there was something that needed to be taken downstairs. As I recall, it was a box, and my older sister was carrying it. Because it was still daylight, she didn't bother to turn on the basement light. It was pretty dark, though, at the bottom of the stairwell.

Suddenly, there was a splashy sound and a shriek. She had stepped off the bottom stair into several inches of water.

The rest of us rushed down to see what was going on. Our entire basement – including a recreation room, bathroom, and laundry and storage rooms – was flooded. We were stymied: What the heck had happened while we were away? Even if there had been heavy rain, our basement was supposed to be waterproof. And even



if some water had managed to seep in, the laundry room floor drain should have facilitated a hasty retreat.

My father quickly removed his socks and shoes and waded around the oppressively muggy basement to investigate the cause. It turned out the washing machine's water control valve had ruptured, causing hot and cold water to leak out on the floor and gradually spread throughout the lower level. (Dad now turns off the water supply taps to the washer whenever the house is going to be uninhabited for more than a day.) Lint and dust and various other bits of debris had caused the floor drain to become clogged.

We had no way of knowing how many days prior the rupture had occurred. (We were just glad we hadn't ended up taking a two-week vacation, as we had done the previous summer.)

Once the drain holes were cleared, the water level quickly subsided, leaving us with waterlogged carpets, waterlines along

the walls, and collapsed cardboard boxes in the storage room, among other things.

Dad rushed out to rent a wet-dry vacuum cleaner, in an effort to salvage the carpet and a new rug. We placed electric fans in every room to expedite the drying process. These ran around the clock for several days.

All in all, a lot of mopping up took place that weekend, not only of the tepid water but of tears as well. That's because much of the resulting water damage occurred to irreplaceable items – mostly of sentimental value – housed in those soggy cartons.

(Those were the days before plastic storage totes came on the market. Back then, everything went into good old grocery-store cardboard boxes.)

Among the casualties my sisters and I counted were seasonal decorations, doll clothes and accessories (both baby doll and Barbie size), puzzles, books, report cards, certificates, prized schoolwork and childhood crafts. Our backyard lawn was littered with such possessions, laid out in the sun to dry. Some were sprinkled with lemon juice and salt in an effort to remove water and rust stains.

Even when we were able to banish telltale signs of damage, a strong musty odor usually remained. So most of the affected

items had to be discarded, to our great disappointment.

At family gatherings, when we get to reminiscing, questions related to favorite childhood possessions inevitably arise, such as, "Whatever happened to Maurice the Monkey (a talking stuffed animal with a French accent)?" More often than not, the answer – usually provided by Mom – is, "It was ruined in the flood."

Needless to say, my sisters and I – now with homes and families of our own – store everything destined for basement storage in deep plastic tote containers. Dad calls it "the Noah's Ark syndrome."

Even in the attic, I won't use cardboard boxes. I'm not taking any chances.

Lisa M. Petsche is a mother of three and freelance journalist specializing in family life.

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## Classifieds

Personals	Anniversaries	Obituaries
<p>Christian widower: (early 60's) in Alberta would like to meet someone. Likes walking, car traveling. Preferably, please call 780-474-6551</p> <p>(Please note: We are sorry but the phone number was wrong last time)</p> <p>or respond to Christian Courier. File #2744 1 Hiscott St St. Catharines ON L2R 1C7</p> 	<p>1949 - August 26 - 2004</p> <p>With gratitude to God for his faithfulness We joyfully announce the <b>55th Wedding Anniversary</b> Of our parents &amp; grandparents</p> <p><b>HERMAN AND NELLIE BERG</b> (nee Joosse)</p> <p>With much love &amp; congratulations Ray &amp; Rita Berg Fran &amp; Brad Robinson Marg &amp; Arnold Egeman Joyce &amp; Pete Douwes John &amp; Pam Berg Sharon Berg &amp; 19 Grandchildren.</p> <p>Address: 1937 Avenue Rd Brights Grove ON N0N 1C0</p>	<p>May 17, 1928 July 22, 2004 Zwaagwesteinde, The Netherlands Chatham, ON</p> <p>"Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations." (Ps. 90:1)</p> <p>In his wisdom, the Lord took to his eternal home his faithful servant</p> <p><b>JOHN POSTMA</b></p> <p>He will be missed by his wife of 54 years, Ann (Zylstra), and Children and grandchildren:</p> <p>Ted &amp; Marg Postma, Chatham, Ontario (Derek &amp; Amy - Alie, Anne &amp; Don - Olivia, Courtney &amp; Andrew (fiancee)) Peter &amp; Helen Postma, Hamilton, Ontario (Stacie, Kevin, Amanda, Katie) Gary &amp; Gayla Postma, Morrisburg, Ontario (Michael, Daniel, Steven) William &amp; Rebecca Postma, Georgetown, Ontario (Aaron, Hannah) Anita &amp; Todd Kleinwelterink, Sioux Center, Iowa (Joel, Janae)</p> <p>Brother Henk Postma, Ancaster, Ontario Sisters Riek and Tiety in the Netherlands Predeceased by five siblings in the Netherlands</p> <p>The funeral was held in Grace Christian Reformed Church, Chatham, Ontario, on July 27, 2004, Mr. Nathan Gritter officiating. Donations to Chatham Christian School Society in lieu of flowers would be appreciated by the family.</p> <p>Address: Ann Postma, 40 Elm Street - #102, Chatham ON N7M 6A5</p>
<p><b>Births</b></p> <p><b>BOY, OH BOY, OH BOY!</b></p> <p>"The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy." Psalm 126:3</p> <p>With thanks to the Lord for making all things well, we announce the births of:</p> <p><b>Elijah Sebastian Mudde</b>, born to Terence &amp; Henny nee Waldemar, May 26, 2004, Lippo Karawaci, Indonesia</p> <p><b>Alexander David Mudde</b>, born to James &amp; Monica nee Proper, July 18, 2004, Hamilton, Ontario</p> <p><b>Nicholas Martin Brouwer</b>, born to Eric &amp; Brenda, July 25, 2004, Ottawa, Ontario Brother for Carraugh &amp; Gillian</p> <p>New nephews and cousins for Gerry &amp; Marsha Adema, Steven, Michael, Sarah, Ingleside, Ontario Delighted grandparents Martin &amp; Wilma Mudde</p>	 <p>With thankfulness to God, we, the children of</p> <p><b>NICK AND ANNE DEKONING</b></p> <p>invite you to join us in celebrating the <b>50th Anniversary</b> of our parents. An <b>Open House</b> will be held on Saturday, August 28 from 2 - 4 p.m. at the Palmerston Missionary Church. <i>Best wishes only, please.</i></p> <p>With much love: Your children, 17 grandchildren &amp; 1 great-grandchild Home address: Box 122, Palmerston ON N0G 2P0</p>	<p>"If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord." Romans 14:7,8</p> <p>On Tuesday, July the 27th, 2004, our Lord called home</p> <p><b>HERMAN DE JONG</b></p> <p>Born January 11, 1932 in Vlagtwedde, Groningen, The Netherlands Died peacefully at home in Jordan Station, Ontario, Canada</p> <p>Dearly loved husband for 49 years of Stiny de Jong</p> <p>Loving Father and Opa of: Henry &amp; Wendy de Jong - Michael, Jovita, Laura Wayne &amp; Marcia de Jong - Janine, Sarah, Mark Edwin &amp; Cindy de Jong - Amy, Blake Gerine &amp; Phil de Jong Vriend - Silas, Justin, Adam David de Jong &amp; Amy Anderson - Evan Christina &amp; Paul de Jong Lantinga - Simon, Gabriela Paul de Jong</p> <p>Cherished brother and brother-in-law of: Truus &amp; Jan Boot / Cees (f) &amp; Janny de Jong Stan &amp; Corrie de Jong / Jaap &amp; Mattie de Jong Hennie &amp; John Kuipers / Harry &amp; Renate van der Laan Hank &amp; Anne van der Laan / Co &amp; Alice van der Laan Rika van der Laan / Diane van der Laan-Feunekes</p> <p>Burial took place at Vineland Cemetery A Memorial Service was held at Jubilee Fellowship CRC on July 31, 2004</p> <p>Correspondence Address: Stiny de Jong 4414 Jordan Road, Jordan Station ON Canada L0R 1S0 Email Address: dejonghs@mergetel.com Donations to CRWRC would be appreciated For more information and to share your stories please go to <a href="http://www.hermandejong.net">www.hermandejong.net</a></p>
<p><b>Birthdays</b></p> <p><b>Gerda Van Veldhuisen (Van Dam)</b></p> <p>celebrates her <b>95th Birthday</b> on August 21. Born in Voorthuizen, now living at 36 - 42nd Street, Whitehouse Station NJ 08889</p> <p>With love from her family, Bill &amp; Grace, George &amp; Fennie, Dick &amp; Kathy, Willie &amp; Reg, 11 grandchildren, and 18 great-grandchildren.</p> <p>She still line and square dances and attends weekly exercises. She rode a sea-do at the cottage in Brockville Ontario this summer.</p>	<p>With thanks to the Lord, we celebrate the <b>90th Birthdays</b> of our parents June 2 (Mother) &amp; August 15 (Father)</p> <p><b>Harmina Van Arragon-Linde</b> AND <b>Willem Van Arragon</b></p> <p>"I will lie down and sleep in peace, for You alone, Oh Lord, make me dwell in safety." Psalm 4:8</p> <p>Jenny &amp; Martin Oldengarm Geertje &amp; Charles Bamford Mary Ann &amp; Jerry Kingma Gary &amp; Gretchen Van Arragon Leo &amp; Cathy Van Arragon Harma Badgley Wilma Van Arragon, Ralph Linder Wayne Collinson Mike Parker, Eleanor Thompson Dan Fletcher</p> <p>Grandchildren &amp; great-grandchildren</p> <p>Opportunity for congratulations was offered at Strathmere Lodge, Strathroy, ON.</p> <p>Correspondence may be sent to them c/o Mary Ann &amp; Jerry Kingma RR #7 - 28256 Pike Rd Strathroy ON N7G 3H8 E-mail: <a href="mailto:jmkingma@execulink.com">jmkingma@execulink.com</a></p>	<p><b>Obituaries</b></p> <p>Scheveningen, the Netherlands Fort Langley, BC March 7, 1939 July 15, 2004</p> <p><b>NEL MOLENAAR</b> (nee Van Duyvenvoorde)</p> <p>went to her eternal home to be with her Lord and Savior</p> <p>Dear wife of Andy for 34 years.</p> <p>Beloved mother of: Ingrid &amp; Paul Vos Jeremy Kimberly &amp; Art Schaafsma Kirstin Jason &amp; Mandy Hester Jeff Ian</p> <p>Dear Oma of: Ruby, Nicole, Kerri, Tyler, June, Jessie, Alana, Leanne</p> <p>The interment took place in Fort Langley followed by a Memorial service at the Langley CRC on Wednesday, July 21, 2004 with Rev. Martin J. Contant officiating.</p> <p>Psalm 121: 1 &amp; 2 "I lift up my eyes to the hills..."</p> <p>Home address: Andy Molenaar 9093 Wright Steel, Langley BC V1N 3T3</p>
<p><b>Wedding</b></p> <p>We, Peter &amp; Jane Van Duyvenvoorde happily announce the marriage of our son</p> <p><b>Michael Peter</b> to <b>Laura Lynn Goobie</b></p> <p>We pledge them our loving support as they, together with Breanna and Grace begin a new family</p> <p>May the Lord continue to richly bless them.</p> <p>The <b>Wedding Ceremony</b> took place in Hamilton on Saturday August 7, 2004 at the People's Church.</p> <p>Home address: 25B Bryna Avenue Hamilton ON L9A 4W9</p>	<p>Lloessens, Friesland Abbotsford, BC May 28, 1934 July 17, 2004</p> <p><b>EEFKE (Evelyn) BANDSTRA</b> (nee Faber)</p> <p>went home to be with her Lord and Savior</p> <p>Psalm 23:6 "I will dwell in the house of the Lord Forever."</p> <p>She will be greatly missed and will be remembered with love by her Devoted husband Herman</p> <p>Children: Jack &amp; Christina Bandstra, Ladner Dylan, Hayley, Elliot Joanne Bandstra, Abbotsford</p> <p>Correspondence address: H. Bandstra 34944 Skyline Drive, Abbotsford BC V2S 5C5</p>	<p>On his sixth birthday, Friday July 23, 2004, as the result of a tragic accident</p> <p><b>COLLIN ROBERT GERRIT BRINKERT</b></p> <p>of St. Anns went to be with his heavenly Father.</p> <p>Beloved son of Robert &amp; Rosalie (nee Smit) Brinkert. Cherished brother of Sarah Lynn, Stephanie Anne and Robyn Caroline. Dearly loved grandson of Bob &amp; Ann Brinkert and Gerrit &amp; Sandra Smit. Collin will also be sadly missed by his loving aunts and uncles: Ingrid &amp; Wilfred Schilstra, Caroline &amp; Alan Bos, Elaine &amp; Allen de Kroon, Ron &amp; Laurie Smit, Linda &amp; John Zwaagstra, Charlene &amp; Jake den Hollander, Carolene &amp; John Ryzobel, Irene &amp; Craig Somers, and by his many cousins, schoolmates and friends.</p> <p>The funeral service was held on Tuesday, July 27, 2004 at 11:00 a.m. at Smithville Christian Reformed Church, 6522 Smithville Road, with Rev. John De Jonge and Stanley Groothof officiating. Memorial contributions to Covenant Christian School would be appreciated by the family.</p> <p>A heartfelt thank you to all of our family, friends and neighbors for all your love and support.</p> <p>"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these." Mark 10:14</p> <p>Correspondence: 4579 Sixteen Rd, RR1, ST ANNS ON L0R 1Y0</p> <p><b>Een Inspirerend mens is heengegaan</b> in zijn zo geliefde Andalucia is vrij plotseling overleden <b>MR J. H. W. FIETELAARS</b> oud-Ambassadeur</p> <p>Eindhoven: 9 december 1936 Puerto Real: 17 juli 2004 Correspondentie-adres: Churchillaan 34, 5242 BE Rosmalen</p>



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a congregation of 424 members, is seeking an individual who has a heart for Youth ministry. If you are gifted in this area and possess the required education and/or experience necessary you may apply. For a job description and to send your resume contact:

Charlottetown Christian Reformed Church,  
155 Mount Edward Road,  
Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, C1A 5T1  
or fax# **902-894-3370** or email [chtownccr@pei.aibn.com](mailto:chtownccr@pei.aibn.com)

**The Exeter Christian Reformed Church,**  
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Applicants should have a formal education and related experience. A copy of the job description can be requested by emailing the address below. Please submit your resume and statement of faith to the

Exeter Christian Reformed Church,  
332 Huron Street West,  
Exeter, Ontario NOM 1S2  
Attention: Ron Devries

-or- by emailing: [ron.devries@syfilco.on.ca](mailto:ron.devries@syfilco.on.ca).



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**3818 14a St. SW, Calgary, AB T2T 3Y2**  
or email: [michael.koot@shaw.ca](mailto:michael.koot@shaw.ca)

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For information please contact:

Vicky Van Andel [vanandel@emmanuelhome.ab.ca](mailto:vanandel@emmanuelhome.ab.ca)  
or fax resume to **1-780-473-0970**.

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by email at [sidjt@tollendalevillage.ca](mailto:sidjt@tollendalevillage.ca) or  
by fax at 705-722-0469

For more information about Tollendale Village  
visit our comprehensive website at  
[www.tollendalevillage.ca](http://www.tollendalevillage.ca)

For job opportunities recently published in the Christian Courier,  
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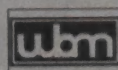
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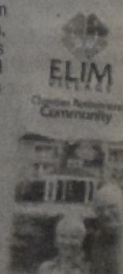
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## Events/Advertising

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Aug 22** A Dutch service will be held in the **Ancaster** CRC at 3 pm. Rev P. vanEgmond preaching
- Sept 18** Sample the world of international development at the **CRWRC Global Bazaar**, 9 a.m. -1 p.m. at Faith CRC in **Burlington**. Add culture to your décor with crafts, colorful cloths and artifacts handmade in **CRWRC** project countries. Try a tasty morsel from the multicultural finger food bar. View slideshows, participate in live demos and tap your toes to international rhythms. Kids collect stamps in their "passport" as they visit huts filled with info and photos from the field. For more details phone 905-336-2920 or send an email to [hunseh@crcna.ca](mailto:hunseh@crcna.ca).
- Sept 18** You are invited to the 25th Anniversary Celebration of Shalom Manor at Mountainview Christian Reformed Church in **Grimsby**, at 2 p.m.
- Oct 28, 29** OCSTA 50th anniversary convention at Redeemer University College, **Ancaster**, and the Hamilton District Christian High School; inspirational address: Dr. Anthony Campolo; educational address: Prof. Hugh Cook. website: [www.ocsta.org](http://www.ocsta.org)
- Oct 30** Concert of Sacred Music by **St. Thomas Crescendo Male Choir** 7:30 p.m. **Wallaceburg** CRC, 150 Bruinsma Ave. **Wallaceburg** (Free will offering) Info: (519) 637-4357
- Nov. 5** Christian Festival Concert, Roy Thomson Hall, **Toronto**, 7:30 pm. Order tickets from Ontario Christian Music Assembly, Ph: 416-636-9779 or email: [landmkooy@rogers.com](mailto:landmkooy@rogers.com)
- Nov 6** Concert of Sacred Music by **St. Thomas Crescendo Male Choir** 7:30 p.m. **Maranatha** CRC, 2811 Highway #2 East **Bowmanville** (Free will offering ) Info: (519) 637-4357
- Nov. 6, 7** Calvin CRC, **Dundas**, Ont. will celebrate their 50th year. Come join our celebration! Festivities are being planned. For info: Fred VanderVelde at 905-336-5619 Fax: 905-336-2376 or Brenda DeGroot at 905-689-6350 or email: [p-b.degroot@sympatico.ca](mailto:p-b.degroot@sympatico.ca)
- Nov 27** Concert of Sacred Music by **St. Thomas Crescendo Male Choir** 7:30 p.m. **Bethel** CRC, 17 Robinson Road, off Hwy. #3 **Dunnville** (Free will Offering) Info: (905) 387-0235
- Dec 12** Christmas Concert by **St. Thomas Crescendo Male Choir** 7:30 p.m. **Knox** Presbyterian Church, 55 Hincks Street, **St. Thomas** (Free will offering ) Info: (519) 637-4357
- Dec 19** Christmas Concert by **St. Thomas Crescendo Male Choir** 7:30 p.m. **Knox** Presbyterian Church, 9 Victoria Street North, **Goderich** (Free will offering) Info: (519) 637-4357
- 2005**
- Apr 9** Concert of Sacred Music by **St. Thomas Crescendo Male Choir** 7:30 p.m. **Bethel** CRC, 716 Classic Drive, **London** (Free will offering) Info: (519) 637-4357
- May 1** Concert of Sacred Music by **St. Thomas Crescendo Male Choir** 7:30 p.m. **Knox** Presbyterian Church, 55 Hincks Street, **St. Thomas** (Free will offering) Info: (519) 637-4357

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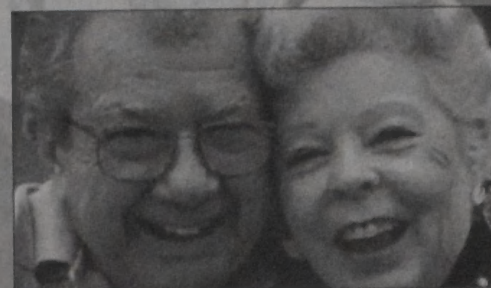
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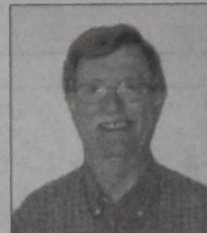
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## News / Advertising

# Barnabas Fund presents apostasy campaign petition to the UN



Paul Cook presents petition to Louise Arbour

On July 28, Barnabas Fund presented to Louise Arbour, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, a major international petition signed by 88,890 people from 32 countries calling for "Muslims who choose to convert to another faith" to be "free to do so without having to face a lifetime of fear as a result."

The petition was launched a year ago on behalf of Muslims who convert to another faith (apostates) who face serious persecution and massive prejudice in many countries around the world. As well as meeting Mrs Arbour a Barnabas Fund representative also met with Ambassador Mike Smith,

Chairman of the UN Commission on Human Rights and Mr Soli J Sorabjee, Chairman of the UN Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights at the Palais des Nations in Geneva.

In addition to the 88,890 signatures collected from around the world, 92 British MPs last year signed an Early Day Motion in connection with the campaign in the House of Commons which commences: "That this house supports liberal Muslims, human rights campaigners and others who are calling for an end to cruel traditional punishments for apostasy."

## Persecution of converts

According to traditional Islamic law (Shariah), adult Muslim men who choose to adopt any other belief and refuse to return to Islam, should be put to death. Other punishments include the annulment of marriage, the removal of children and the loss of all property and inheritance rights. This tradition is still upheld and taught by most Muslim religious leaders around the world today. In some countries (notably Iran, Saudi Arabia and Sudan) this is part of the law, and Muslims who have adopted another belief have faced imprisonment, death threats, torture and beatings because of their decision. Some have been executed; others have died in prison or disappeared. Even in countries where apostasy is not punished by

law, Muslims who adopt another belief often face widespread hostility and aggression from their own families and communities.

## Deafening silence

Over the past year supporters of Barnabas Fund's campaign have written to Muslim leaders, parliamentarians, heads of state, public figures and religious leaders around the world urging them to speak out on this crucial issue. In the UK alone hundreds of letters have been sent to the Muslim Council of Britain urging a constructive dialogue on the matter; to the best of our knowledge not a single response has been received. Hundreds of letters have also been sent to the main regional heads of the UK's Christian denominations, with virtually no response. Many privately acknowledge the terrible suffering of apostates and admit to the gravity of the situation, but are unprepared to speak out publicly.

The British government has produced very non-committal replies appearing to dismiss the plight of those labelled as apostates as something which does not concern them domestically since "Shariah law does not apply in the UK." This is despite the fact that in April 2004 Sheikh Omar Bakri Mohammed of the extremist Islamic organization al-Muhajiroun issued a fatwa condemning the Muslim Labour peer Lord Ahmed of Rotherham as an apostate be-



Lord Ahmed

cause of his calls for greater integration of Muslims into British society. When even members of its own government are the victims of veiled threats as apostates surely this is an issue the British authorities must deal with both seriously and publicly.

## Speaking out

Speaking from Barnabas Fund's office Dr Patrick Sookhdeo, international director of the Fund said "It is a tragic day when so few political or religious leaders can be found who are prepared to stick their necks out by simply publicly affirming the most basic of human rights to change one's religion, something that has been enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights for over fifty years."

"My hope and prayer is that this campaign will help to end the turning of a blind eye to the suffering of converts from Islam, and instead put their desperate needs firmly on to the international human rights agenda where they very much belong," Dr Sookhdeo said.

Further information on the issue of Apostasy and the persecution of converts is available on Barnabas Fund's website <http://www.barnabasfund.org/Apostasy.htm>

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